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# New Orleans Mint Gold Coins: 1839-1909



A Numismatic History and Analysis  
By Douglas Winter





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*By Douglas Winter*

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*New Orleans Mint Gold Coins: 1839-1909*

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## About the Author



Douglas Winter was born in New York City. He became interested in rare coins at an early age. By the time he was thirteen, Winter was a fixture at Eastern coin conventions where he would exhibit his collection and buy and sell coins.

After graduating from college, Winter went to work for a large Texas coin firm in 1982. He served as the Director of Research for this company and was responsible for many of its catalogs, price lists and promotional material. In 1985, Winter established his own firm, Douglas Winter Consulting. This company specializes in rare date gold and silver coinage from the 18th and 19th centuries.

In addition to buying and selling coins to other dealers and collectors, Winter is interested in writing and researching. He plans to eventually write in-depth books on all the mints which struck United States gold coins. His next work will focus on the gold coinage of the Carson City Mint.

Douglas Winter is a member of all leading numismatic organizations including the Professional Numismatists Guild (PNG). He resides in Dallas, Texas with his wife Kerrin who is a well-known photographer.

Questions and Comments regarding this book can be addressed to the author at: P.O. Box 190313, Dallas, TX 75219.

## **Dedicated To**

Jane W. Franks for all the obvious—  
and the not so obvious—reasons.

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## Foreword

*by Q. David Bowers*

The New Orleans Mint struck various denominations of gold coins from 1839 through 1861, when operations ceased following the takeover of the institution by the state of Louisiana and, later, the Confederacy. Unfortunately for posterity, the Confederate States of America did not elect to produce its own gold coins of distinctive designs. Years later, in 1879, the New Orleans Mint reopened and production of coins was continued through 1906. As curious as it may seem today, during most of the period of operation of this facility, few collectors cared whether or not a piece bore an O mintmark. Indeed, by the time the last gold coin, a \$10 piece, left the New Orleans Mint in 1906, probably not a single numismatist anywhere in the world desired to assemble a mintmarked set of such pieces. Because of this, in virtually all instances freshly minted coins went directly into circulation, where they were used and used intensely. Such items as 1850-O and 1851-O \$20 pieces were workhorse coins, needed in the channels of domestic and foreign commerce, and saw extensive duty. Within a year or two a typical coin was worn down to the level of AU or even EF. A dozen or so years later the grade was even lower.

Finally in the 1940s there was a great awakening of interest in collecting mintmarked gold coins. The only problem was that by that time the typical surviving piece, especially from the earlier years, was apt to be VF or EF. Even AU coins in some instances were rare and for numerous issues Uncirculated pieces were unknown.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s interest increased, as it did in the 1960s and has continued to the present day. For much of this collecting period, the numismatist had little in the way of informational sources. Finally, in 1975 David W. Akers published the first of his denominational studies on United States gold coins: a book covering all varieties of gold dollars minted from 1849 through 1889, including along the way various New Orleans issues. David listed auction appearances, gave estimates of rarity, and furnished other valuable data. For the first time, interested devotees were able to learn approximately how many of a given issue existed in a given grade range. The Akers volumes were issued denomination by denomination until the \$20

book was published in 1982. Unfortunately, these books are out of print today.

In the meantime, other information was available here and there to the specialist in New Orleans Mint coins, specifically in the form of auction catalogues such as the all-inclusive Eliasberg Collection, and in general reference books, perhaps the most notable being *Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of United States and Colonial Coins*. However, then and now, there was no book specifically devoted to New Orleans gold.

Now comes Douglas Winter with the volume you hold in your hands. Doug has spent quite a few years making notes and gathering data. Now it is between two covers for you to contemplate, enjoy, and use.

Here is a book that should pay for itself quickly for anyone who does employ it as a guide to making purchases. Contemplate, for example, the 1840-O \$5 piece which the 1992 *Guide Book* lists at \$2,750 in Mint State. Doug Winter tells us that just two or three specimens are known. Obviously, even if one paid double the current *Guide Book* price, a bargain would be acquired. Even more to the point is the 1842-O, which catalogues \$2,500, but Douglas Winter tells us that just one exists! Perhaps it is worth 10 times catalogue! Those who own just a copy of the *Guide Book* wouldn't know this, but you, as an owner of the present book, will.

There are some puzzlements too. Take as an example the 1841-O \$10, which the *Guide Book* lists for \$8,000 Uncirculated. Douglas Winter tells us that not a single piece exists.

As you shall see in the following pages, some coins are fairly plentiful in lower grades but emerge as extreme rarities in Mint State. The 1850-0 double eagle is a case in point. The author suggests that somewhere between 110 and 127 are known in VF grade, but in Mint State the population dwindles to just one or two. Then there is the curious situation of the 1888-O eagle, of which 50 to 60 Mint State pieces are known, but only 35 to 55 in VF grade—a coin which is easier to find in Mint State than in well-worn condition.

Numismatists will welcome the Winter book as a desirable addition to their libraries.

## Preface

Gold coins from the Charlotte and Dahlonega mints have proven to be very popular with collectors. However, the third Southern branch mint, located in New Orleans, has been relegated to numismatic backwater.

While describing an 1855-O half eagle in the Eliasberg Collection sale catalogue of October 1982, Q. David Bowers wrote the following:

"In general, collectors have paid much attention to the gold emissions of the Charlotte and Dahlonega mints. Overlooked to a degree have been pieces from New Orleans and San Francisco... New Orleans coins have...been in limbo with collectors. Pieces with 'O' mintmarks were used intensely in circulation or were exported in certain instances. During the mid-19th century there was no numismatic interest in saving them, thus today top-grade pieces are in many instances major rarities.... It just may be the case that in some future year a number of these issues will sell for more than Charlotte or Dahlonega coins, or at least be priced on a comparable basis. They deserve it."

I wish I could say that after reading that brilliant paragraph I immediately set about buying all the high-grade New Orleans gold coins that I could find. But I didn't. In fact, it took me about another half a decade to get smart.

As prices for high-grade Dahlonega and Charlotte gold coins reached near-stratospheric levels in the late 1980s early 1990s, I turned my focus to New Orleans gold. I quickly learned just how rare many of these issues were in high grade. After studying the various issues, I decided to share what I have learned with collectors and dealers.

The intention of this book is to provide the collector and the numismatic professional with a comprehensive and interesting information source. Instead of focusing on the history of the New Orleans Mint (which, to be honest, is a very difficult subject due to a glaring lack of contemporary records and accounts), my emphasis is on the coins themselves. After speaking with the leading gold coin dealers and collectors, I have realized that this is what interests people most.

For each specific issue I have included the most important information about strike, surface characteristics, lustre, coloration, significant varieties, diagnostic criteria, etc. This information is complemented by rarity and Condition Census findings.

My rarity research is split in two: rarity by date (i.e., the total number of coins known for a specific issue in all grades) and rarity by grade. My findings are based on auction records from 1945 to the present, as well as by personal observation and input from specialists.

I can not realistically expect my findings on rarity to be 100% accurate as I did not have information concerning all of the known New Orleans coins. For example, I tried for over a year to get access to one of the major collections of New Orleans gold but its owner would not even deign to give me a reply.

The rarity findings in this book will be most useful when they are used comparatively and when they are used to calculate arithmetic / geometric levels of rarity (i.e., determining how rare an issue is in ascending grades and in specific grade levels). I expect the overall population figures for each date to be somewhat conservative; especially for many of the later issues such as the 1888-1906 eagles which are still being found in Europe. But, I am fairly confident that the in-grade rarity distribution will remain constant. By this, I mean that if the total number known of a specific date turns out to be 35% too low, the number of Very Fine, Extremely Fine and About Uncirculated coins will remain proportionate.

My use of the term "Condition Census" refers to the five finest known coins for each date. In this case, "finest known" refers to those coins which I have seen personally or which at least one reliable source has seen the coin. When doing research for this book, I heard some pretty wild rumors about coins which I seriously doubt exist. And, I'd prefer to keep them as rumors....

In the case of coins graded by third-party services (specifically PCGS or NGC), I have relied on how I grade the coin—and not what the "slab" says. In some cases, I agree with the grading services' grades. In other cases, I think their grades are either too low or too high. In such cases, I have noted my disagreement.

As with any Condition Census, I fully expect that mine will be seriously outdated within the next two to three years. There are, no doubt, some potential Condition Census pieces which are either

hidden in old collections or which are residing in non-collector accumulations. By its very nature, *any* Condition Census is ephemeral. The publication of this book should spur interest in New Orleans gold (like the publication of my Charlotte book did in 1987), and this inevitably brings coins out of hiding.

The gold coinage of the New Orleans Mint has been neglected for too long. It is my hope that this book, which is the first full-length research ever published on this subject, will generate new interest and support among dealers and collectors.

Douglas Winter  
Dallas, Texas



## Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the following individuals and/or firms for their assistance in the completion of this book:

Dr. Richard Appel, Q. David Bowers, Walter Breen, Mike Brownlee, Winthrop Carner, Jim Halperin, Michael Hodder, Joey and Susie Lamonte, Vandy Little, Ed Milas, Mid American Rare Coin Auctions, Tom Mulvaney, Jeff Notrica, Adam Rodell.

The majority of the photographs used in this book were supplied by Tom Mulvaney. The others were supplied by Bowers and Merena.

The cover photograph was taken by Kerrin Winter and access to the coin was generously supplied by Mike Brownlee.





## How to Use This Book

The style and format of this book is modeled after that which I used in my 1987 book "Charlotte Mint Gold Coins: 1838-1861, A Numismatic History and Analysis." I originally decided on this format due to its simplicity and its congruence with other published works dealing with United States gold coinage.

### I. Outline of Types

At the beginning of each section in this book, there is an outline of the major types of gold dollars, quarter eagles, three-dollar gold pieces, half eagles, eagles, and double eagles which were struck at the New Orleans Mint. These outlines are provided for the collector who is interested in building a meaningful type set of New Orleans gold. Also included in these outlines are the mintage figures for each date, as well as the total mintage figures for each type. I have always found it interesting to compare the total mintage figures for one type (i.e., Type I gold dollars) versus that of another type. It is very important to remember that these mintage figures are primarily contextual in nature. Comparing the figures for Type I gold dollars versus No Motto half eagles is like comparing apples to oranges and it is certainly no way to base any significant study.

### II. Issues and Varieties

In this book, the term "issue" refers to a specific date, denomination, and design. An 1850-O gold dollar, thus, is an issue. The term variety refers to a minting peculiarity or characteristic which gives a quality of "uniqueness" to coins of similar denominations, types or years. An 1840-O Broad Mill half eagle is, thus, a variety.

### III. Mintages

Mintage figures for all New Orleans gold coins are based on official Mint records. A few issues show variations in their published figures. In such instances, I have chosen the figure which I feel is the most accurate and which is most accepted among researchers and specialists. Mintage figures for varieties such as the 1840-O Broad Mill half eagle and the two varieties of 1843-O quarter eagles are based on delivery records and confirmation by such experts as Walter Breen and Robert W. Julian.

#### IV. Rarity

After reading this book, you will realize that many New Orleans gold coins are rare by any definition of that term. But just how rare are they? To answer this question, I have attempted to establish the total number known for each issue, to determine the overall rarity for each issue and to provide a table of "in-grade rarity" for each issue.

It is, of course, nearly impossible to know the exact number of coins known for a specific issue or variety. Therefore, I have endeavored to establish a range which attempts to list an informed approximation of how many examples of a specific issue are known. This range is based on frequency of appearance at auction, population counts of coins held in museums and tightly-held collections, pieces I have seen at conventions, pieces graded by PCGS and NGC, and an approximation of coins I believe should exist but which I have not seen. (This explains, for example, why I may say two or three Mint State examples of an issue are known but may only list one Mint State coin in the Condition Census). It is very likely that my findings are on the conservative side and that each issue or variety has a total population which is higher than what I have estimated. (In the case of my Charlotte book, the populations have proven to be about 10% to 30% greater, with many more high-grade examples known than I had imagined).

The "overall rarity" for each issue or variety is based on the "Rarity Table" (see page 25). This scale of rarity is based on the system devised by Dr. William Sheldon. When a specific issue or variety has a total population range which crosses two levels of rarity, I have listed the lower level of rarity first.

The concept of "in-grade rarity" may not be familiar to some readers of this book. This concept means each issue or variety has a specific rarity rating for each grade. These ratings are not always geometric. The existence of a hoard, for example, might make Mint State-60 examples of a specific issue more plentiful than Very Fine examples. For every issues and significant variety, I have broken down the total population into a "by grade" distribution. These findings are based on my personal observations and those of a number of leading collectors and dealers.

#### V. Condition Census

A Condition Census is a listing of the finest known examples of an issue or a variety. In this book, the Condition Census is limited to the five finest specimens; not including ties. *The listings in this book represent the Condition Census for each variety or issue as I know it.* These

include coins which I have viewed at auctions (or which were viewed by specialists who know how to grade New Orleans gold), pieces I have seen at shows, and coins which have been graded by PCGS or NGC. Pedigree chains (i.e., records of ownership) have been constructed with the input of collectors, dealers, pictorial records, and my own notes and observations. *Each coin in the Condition Census has been graded according to current grading standards.*

#### VI. Photographs

Each issue and significant variety has been photographed to show the reader a representative example of the coin under discussion. While most of the coins are of very high quality, very few are finest known. If a coin you own is "better than the Winter plate coin," this does not mean anything more than it is a nice piece. Gold dollars and quarter eagles have been enlarged to 1-1/2 times actual size while the other denominations are life sized.



## Grading Commentary

The Condition Census and in-grade rarity data in this book are based on "modern" grading standards and the reader should interpret this data accordingly.

I have discounted nearly all grades listed in auction catalogues which appeared prior to the 1960s. The grading standards of the older numismatic auction firms are extremely imprecise and very few coins which were called "Uncirculated" before the 1960s would qualify as such today.

Auction records from 1960 until the mid 1980s are not discounted but are, rather, compensated for. By this, I mean that the standards of today are much tighter than in the past. Virtually any coin which was graded Mint State-60 before the mid 1980s would only grade About Uncirculated-50 to About Uncirculated-55 today.

For the most part, PCGS and NGC grade New Orleans gold coins according to "modern" standards. Throughout this book I have noted instances where the grade assigned by a third-party service is, in my estimation, too high or too low, or when I agree with it.

Any collector, dealer, or investor who is contemplating the purchase of a Condition Census or finest known coin should employ contemporary grading standards. For detailed points on how to grade New Orleans gold coins, I suggest that the collector view as many pieces as possible and familiarize himself with the grading section which appears in this book. If the collector or investor is unwilling to take the time to learn this skill, then I *strongly* advise him to find a reputable dealer and establish a close relationship with that person.

## Grading Guide

The decision to collect New Orleans Mint gold coins is a wise one. It should provide the collector with a real challenge and, possibly, financial benefits over the long run. But, as with so many pieces of good news, there is a piece of bad news to act as a counterbalance. Very few people know how to grade New Orleans gold coinage.

You can apply a fairly rigorous standard to gold coins such as Saint-Gaudens double eagles. But no set of standards can be applied to New Orleans gold as a whole. The various issues differ from year to year and from denomination to denomination. And this is, after all, part of the reason why you, the collector, have decided to focus on No Motto New Orleans eagles instead of Franklin half dollars.

Gold is a soft coinage metal. Because of this, strike does not usually play as much of a role in determining grade as on nickel coins. Virtually all branch mint gold coins were poorly struck and certain New Orleans issues are among the most poorly struck of all.

New Orleans issues which are most likely to be poorly manufactured—and as a consequence are the hardest to grade—include the quarter eagles of the 1840s, the half eagles of the 1850s and the eagles from the late 1840s through the mid 1850s. On many of these issues, it is not uncommon to find pieces struck from rusted, swelled, clashed nor cracked dies. Many issues pair one good die with one worn die, resulting in a coin which may look Very Fine on the obverse and About Uncirculated on the reverse!

The grading guide which follows should apply only to those issues which come relatively well struck. On issues which always come weakly struck (such as the 1842-O quarter eagle or the 1883-O eagle), the best way to grade is by observing the amount of lustre which is present and compensating for the weakness of strike.

### **Fine (Fine-12)**

All of the letters in LIBERTY will be legible except for the upper left corner of the L. The hair will show little detail and the jaw will be worn smooth. The eagle's feathers will show less than 50% of the original detail, while the claws will show little or no detail. The lines in the

shield will be merged. In addition to heavy wear, a number of significant abrasions or planchet flaws may be present.

#### **Fine or better (Fine-15)**

Slightly more detail will be present, especially on the feathers. The color and the surfaces will be more pleasing. There will be more eye appeal than on a Fine (12) coin. *Most gold coins graded Fine show signs of having been cleaned at one time or are heavily worn.*

#### **Very Fine (Very Fine-20)**

LIBERTY will be full and clear. Some of the hair detail, especially above the tiara, will be visible. The rims and the denticles, depending on the date and the issue, will show some clear detail. About 50% of the eagle's feathers will be visible, and the outlines of the claws will be present. The shield lines, particularly the vertical ones, will show around 50% of the original detail. The pattern of wear may be even but it will not be uncommon for a coin in this condition to show abrasions, planchet flaws, hairlines, etc.

#### **Very Fine or better (Very Fine-35)**

LIBERTY will be noticeably sharper, as will the hair and the feathers. Less wear will show on the tips of the wings and the shield lines will be sharper. The color and surfaces will be more pleasing than on a Very Fine (20) coin.

#### **Extremely Fine (Extremely Fine-40)**

Wear will be obvious but minimal. Most of the wear will be confined to the tip of the coronet, the hair about the ear of Liberty, and the wing tips. The shield and the claws will show much definition, except on specific issues where these details are always found weakly struck. There will be traces of original mint lustre, especially in the protected areas (i.e., the fields closest to the devices and around the stars and letters). A few abrasions or planchet flaws may be present.

#### **Extremely Fine or better (Extremely Fine-45)**

The amount of wear will be somewhat lighter, especially on the cheek, below the eye of Liberty and on the wing tips. Approximately 20% to 50% of the original mint lustre will be present except on those specific issues which are typically found with dull surfaces. The color and the surfaces will be more pleasing than those found on an Extremely Fine-40 coin.

### **About Uncirculated (About Uncirculated-50)**

There will be a very small amount of wear visible to the naked eye and this will be concentrated on the tip of the coronet and, when applicable, on the hair around LIBERTY and near the ear. On the reverse, wear will be concentrated on the wing tips and, where applicable, on the feathers on the neck and around the claws. At least half of the original mint lustre will be visible except on typically dull or "seawater" coins. While bagmarks may be present (especially on large coins), no severe planchet flaws are allowable.

### **About Uncirculated or better (About Uncirculated-55)**

The only areas which show definite wear are the highest relief details. At least 75% of the original mint lustre remains and the protected areas may show nearly full lustre. The color will be original and the surfaces will be cleaner than on an AU-50 coin. To many, a coin of this quality will appear to be fully Mint State.

### **Mint State**

With the exception of certain gold dollar issues, the 1893-O and 1894-O half eagles, and many of the With Motto eagles, New Orleans gold coins are not generally found in Mint State grades. Since many new collectors will be drawn to higher grade pieces, it is important for them to have some conception of Mint State standards. It should be remembered that these generally apply to more common, better struck issues.

Mint State-60: The surfaces will be fully lustrous, but may be slightly dulled on the high spots. Typically, many abrasions or bagmarks will be present, especially on the obverse.

Mint State-61: There will be a few less marks than on a "60" coin and the color and/or the general appearance may be slightly better. A coin graded MS-61 (and MS-60 for that matter) may show hairlines from an old cleaning but will have no real wear from circulation.

Mint State-62: The lustre will be more intense than on a lower-end Mint State coin. The surfaces will still show some marks but will be cleaner. The strike may be a bit sharper and the overall level of eye appeal should be considerably higher than on a "60" or "61" coin.

Mint State-63: The surfaces will be reasonably clean with just a few small, well scattered marks noticeable to the naked eye. The color will be rich and original and the lustre will be far above average for the issue. Very few New Orleans gold coins exist at this grade level.

Mint State-64 and higher: With the exception of some of the better coins from the Eliasberg Collection and a few other pieces, New Orleans gold coinage is virtually non-existent in Mint State-64 and higher grades. When such pieces do come up for sale (which is



infrequently), they are very well struck, have blazing lustre and are extremely clean with just a few marks visible. The majority of the really choice New Orleans gold coins which do exist—other than the aforementioned Eliasberg coins—are either gold dollars or 20th-century eagles.

### Net Grading

In many instances, the grading services employ the theory of “net grading” when encapsulating coins. (Note: Neither PCGS or NGC have official policies regarding net grading and both would probably deny that they use this practice. However, it is my belief that they do employ this practice and most professionals—myself included—do exactly the same). The grading services are in the business of grading and, obviously, it benefits them to grade as many coins as possible. Normally, grading services reject cleaned or “problem” coins. But since so many circulated rare-date gold coins have been cleaned at one time or another, the services tend to view such coins with more lax standards than with Mint State or Proof coins.

The net grade of a coin takes its technical grade (i.e., how much actual wear the coin shows) and subtracts any cleaning, flaws, etc. to produce a market or net grade. In other words, a coin which has the sharpness of an Extremely Fine-45 but which has been cleaned on one side will not be valued at the full “45” level by experts. Instead, they may give it the same value as an unimpaired Very Fine-30 or 35 coin.

As a rule, both PCGS and NGC will grade New Orleans gold coins which have been lightly to moderately cleaned on one side. Both services are less likely to grade coins which have been cleaned on both sides; particularly if the cleaning appears to be of recent origin.

There is no set formula for net grading coins. However, many experts apply the following standards:

\*If a coin shows an extremely light and obviously old cleaning (i.e., the surfaces now appear natural), the coin will not be downgraded.

\*If a coin has been obviously cleaned on its obverse but not its reverse, it will be downgraded by five to 10 points depending on the severity of the cleaning.

\*If a coin has been obviously cleaned on its reverse, the downgrading may not be as severe as if it has been cleaned only on the obverse.

The reason for this, of course, is that the obverse has more of a visual impact on the viewer than the reverse does.

\*If a coin has been obviously cleaned on both its obverse and its reverse, it stands a good chance of not being encapsulated by a third-party service. It will generally be downgraded anywhere from 10 to 20 points when sold as a "raw" coin.

\*If a coin has been harshly cleaned, wire brushed, whizzed, or repaired, the amount of downgrading will be even more severe. Generally, a coin such as this must be considered damaged and all of the damage it shows must be described when it is being sold. In other words, it is not enough to merely describe a whizzed 1857-O eagle which has the detail of an Extremely Fine-40 as "Very Fine-25." A more accurate way to describe such a coin would be "sharpness of Extremely Fine-40 but whizzed and now with the value of a Very Fine-25 coin." Both PCGS and NGC will not encapsulate any coin which shows any of these problems.

## New Orleans Mint Gold Coinage: An Overview

Gold coins were struck at the New Orleans Mint between 1839 and 1909. Gold dollars, quarter eagles, three-dollar gold pieces, half eagles, eagles, and double eagles were produced.

Gold dollars were struck at the New Orleans Mint from 1849 until 1855. Two types exist. The first, which has a small liberty head, was struck (in New Orleans) from 1849 until 1855. The Type I gold dollars, as they are known, form a very collectible group of six issues. The rarest of these is the 1850-O which is extremely scarce in higher grade. The other gold dollars from this era, though, are relatively plentiful in lower grades and can be obtained without a great amount of difficulty—or expense—in the lower Mint State grades.

The large Indian Head design (or Type II) issues were struck at New Orleans only in 1855. This is a popular one-year type which is often found worn. However, some nice Mint State pieces exist and these are highly prized due to their status as a one-year type.

Gold dollars are one of the least actively collected of all New Orleans gold issues. Much of this has to do with the fact that they are small and many gold coin buyers are partial to larger, more substantial issues.

There are two obvious ways to collect gold dollars. The first would be a date set. Such a group would consist of one example of each New Orleans gold dollar. This set could be easily completed in any circulated grade. In Mint State, this set would be harder to complete but it would still be within the price range of most collectors.

The second way to collect New Orleans gold dollars would be by type. This would include any Type I issue as well as the 1855-O which would illustrate the Type II coinage.

Quarter eagles were struck, with interruptions, from 1839 until 1857. There are a total of 13 issues (actually 14 if one includes both varieties which were struck in 1843) and this is another denomination which may be readily completed.

The 1839-O is a one-year type which has the Classic Head obverse design. This is a rather common and somewhat overrated issue which can be found even in Mint State.

Liberty Head quarter eagles were introduced in 1840. In the 1840s, mintage figures varied dramatically. A few of these issues are quite easy to locate in lower grades but any New Orleans quarter eagle from the 1840s is very rare in higher grades. The rarest issue is the 1845-O while the 1840-O and the 1842-O are also very hard to locate.

The quarter eagles struck in the 1850s are easier to locate but are still quite rare in Uncirculated grades. The 1850-O and the 1856-O are the scarcest New Orleans quarter eagles from this decade.

A complete set of New Orleans quarter eagles can be assembled in VF to AU grades without much trouble or expense. It is recommended that the collector purchase the rare 1845-O in VF and try to find the more common dates in EF-45 to AU-55. Whenever possible, it is important to purchase coins which are well struck, uncleaned, and pleasing to the eye.

The type set collector will wish to purchase nice examples of the Classic Head and Liberty Head types.

Three-dollar gold pieces were struck at the New Orleans Mint only in 1854. This issue is very common in lower grades but it becomes extremely rare in any grade approaching Mint State. A nice AU-50 to AU-55 piece is about as nice an example as the serious collector should be able to locate.

New Orleans half eagles (or \$5 gold pieces) were struck from 1840 until 1857, 1892 to 1894, and again in 1909.

Three types of half eagles were struck at New Orleans. The first (1840-1857) has a Liberty Head obverse and no motto on the reverse. The second (1892-1894) has the same obverse and the motto IN GOD WE TRUST on the reverse. The 1909-O half eagle is the only New Orleans issue of this denomination with the beautiful and popular Indian Head design.

There are 12 No Motto New Orleans half eagles as well as two other very significant varieties. Completing a 14 coin set is challenging but not impossible. However, many of these issues are extremely rare in higher grades, and a set with all Uncirculated coins has never been

assembled. A more realistic goal would be to assemble this set in EF to AU. Even at this level, this set will be hard to finish and it will be very hard to find problem-free, evenly matched specimens.

Only one of the three With Motto New Orleans half eagles—the 1892-O—is rare. The other two issues can be found in the lower Mint State grades for under \$1,000 per issue.

The 1909-O is regarded as one of the real condition rarities of all 20th-century gold issues. It is very common in circulated grades, but it is extremely rare and popular in all Uncirculated grades. The serious date or type collector can obtain a very pleasing AU coin for well under \$1,000.

More eagles (\$10 gold pieces) were struck at the New Orleans Mint than any other gold denomination. Two types exist. The first, which was struck from 1841 until 1860, has the Liberty Head design with no motto on the reverse. The second, which was struck from 1879 until 1906, has the same obverse and the motto IN GOD WE TRUST on the reverse.

The No Motto Liberty Head eagles consist of 20 consecutively dated issues. With very few exceptions, these issues are seldom found in grades above EF-45; a few are unknown in any Mint State grade. Most collectors who assemble complete sets of this type focus on EF-40 to AU-50 pieces. This set is somewhat expensive, and certain issues are very hard to locate in acceptable grades; especially the 1841-O and the 1859-O.

The With Motto Liberty Head eagles consist of 16 irregularly dated issues. Many of these issues can be obtained in the lower Mint State grades since they were shipped to Europe at the time of issues and never actually circulated. But no New Orleans issue of this type is common in any grade above and including MS-63. Most collectors who focus on With Motto Liberty Head eagles focus on EF-40 to MS-60 pieces. The two "stoppers" are the 1879-O and the 1883-O. Both are rare and expensive. Many collectors settle for lower grade examples of these issues.

When buying New Orleans eagles, the date or type collector should always try to find pieces with a minimal number of marks (this is not easy for most issues!), natural coloration, and a sharp, even strike. Pleasing examples of the scarcer dates always sell for more than current pricing guide indications at auction or via private treaty so the

collector should be willing to "stretch" for a nice coin which he needs.

The 13 Liberty Head double eagles struck in New Orleans form the most challenging and popular series of gold coins struck at this mint. Twelve of the issues (dated 1850-1861) have the Type I design with no motto on the reverse. The final issue, dated 1879, has the Type III design with the motto IN GOD WE TRUST on the reverse and the value spelled TWENTY DOLLARS.

While a number of the Type I issues are easy to locate in lower grades, all are extremely rare in Uncirculated grades. The 1855-O, 1859-O and 1861-O are considered to be very scarce in all grades. But the unquestioned keys are the 1854-O and the 1856-O. These two issues are considered to be the rarest gold coins from the New Orleans Mint. Both generally are found in VF to EF grades and tend to come with heavily marked surfaces.

The 1879-O is a rare and popular one-year type coin. Most advanced collections of New Orleans gold contain an example of this date which grades from VF to EF.

The double eagle set is probably the most expensive endeavor a New Orleans gold coin collector can undertake. Both the 1854-O and the 1856-O issues are worth a minimum of \$20,000 in Very Fine. A complete set is definitely achievable, although the collector will have to settle, mostly, for coins grading Very Fine to About Uncirculated.

Unlike the gold coins struck at nearly every other mint, the issues from New Orleans contain no impossible rarities or a multitude of prohibitively expensive issues. Because of this fact, it may well become very popular to build sets of New Orleans gold coins in the near future.

### Summary By Denomination

<u>Denomination</u>	<u># of Issues</u>	<u># of Types</u>	<u>Series Key(s)</u>	<u>Ease of Completion</u>
Gold Dollars	6	2	1850-O	Easy
Quarter Eagles	14(a)	2	1845-O	Moderately Hard
Three Dollars	1	1	—	Easy
Half Eagles	18(b)	3	1847-O	Moderately Hard
Eagles	36	2	1859-O, 83-O	Hard
Double Eagles	13	2	1854-O, 56-O	Very Hard
Totals:	78	12		

Notes:

(a)= This includes both varieties of 1843-O

(b)= This includes both varieties of 1840-O

### Rarity Table

(Based upon the Sheldon Scale)

Number of Specimens	Level of Rarity
1-3	R-8
4-6	High R-7
7-9	Mid R-7
10-12	Low R-7
13-18	High R-6
19-24	Mid R-6
25-30	Low R-6
31-45	High R-5
46-60	Mid R-5
61-75	Low R-5
76 or more	R-4







Section  
**ONE**

## Gold Dollars

I. Type I. Liberty Head (1849-1854)

1849-O, 215,000

1850-O, 14,000

1851-O, 290,000

1853-O, 290,000

Total Mintage: 949,000

II. Type II. Indian Head, Small Head (1854-1856)

1855-O, 55,000

Total Mintage: 55,000

Combined Total Both Types 1,004,000



# 1849-O



Mintage: 215,000

## General Information:

This is a very popular issue, primarily due to its status as the first gold dollar to be struck at the New Orleans Mint. When David Akers published his book on gold dollars (in 1975), this date was believed to be very rare in Mint State. While still somewhat scarce in this grade range, enough pieces have turned up in the intervening years to suggest the existence of a small hoard.

Most 1849-O gold dollars are well struck on the obverse but many are faintly impressed at the center of the reverse. The bases of the LLA in DOLLAR and the tops of the 84 in the date are most often seen with considerable weakness. The edges of certain 1849-O gold dollars are quite broad and somewhat rounded. Die rust is often seen within the denticles and there may be scattered areas of softness in these areas as well. Most pieces show excellent frosty lustre while a few have reflective, semi-prooflike surfaces. The coloration is often excellent with many superb deep green-gold and coppery orange-gold examples known to exist.

All 1849-O gold dollars have an open wreath and a small mintmark. Liberty's head is large and shows the point of the coronet near the star at 12:00. No significant die varieties exist.

The 1849-O gold dollar is scarcer than the 1851-O and the 1853-O. However, Extremely Fine and About Uncirculated examples are relatively easy to locate. Mint State pieces are less rare than once believed but the vast majority of these grade from MS-60 to MS-62. MS-63 and MS-64 coins are very rare while gems are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 250-300

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
80-100	70-80	60-70	40-45
(High R-4)	(High R-4/Low R-5)	(Low R-5/Mid R-5)	(Mid R-5/High R-5)

## Condition Census

1. Superior 10/89:3869, ex: Eliasberg;5, Clapp, G. T. Crawford (1894). MS-65. Later graded MS-65 by PCGS as well.
2. Mid American 5/87:1058, ex Auction '82 (Stack's): 319. MS-64 and nearly at the gem level.
- 3 (tie). A number of other coins including Heritage 6/89:1318 (graded MS-64 by PCGS) and Superior 2/75:408 to a Texas Collection. All grade MS-64.

# 1850-O



Mintage:14,000

## General Information:

As its mintage figure suggests, the 1850-O is the rarest gold dollar struck at the New Orleans Mint.

Most examples of this date are very well struck with strong definition on the hair of Liberty as well as on the date and DOLLAR. The coloration is often a deep green-gold shade although some examples are known with lighter orange and yellow-gold color. Most of the higher grade 1850-O gold dollars have very good lustre. In fact, high-grade pieces are often among the most attractive of all the gold dollars struck at this mint.

All 1850-O gold dollars have a small mintmark. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This is a truly scarce issue in all grades. The typical example grades Very Fine to Extremely Fine. About Uncirculated pieces are rare. Most Uncirculated 1850-O gold dollars grade no better than MS-60. Choice pieces are extremely rare while no gems currently exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known : 90-100

Overall Rarity: High R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF  
35-39  
(High R-5)

EF  
27-30  
(Low R-6)

AU  
19-20  
(Mid R-6)

Mint State  
9-11  
(Low R-7/Mid R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Private collection, sold at the 1974 ANA show and possibly sold in the Stack's February, 1974 sale. MS-64. Described as a gem by knowledgeable sources who viewed it.
2. Heritage 12/86:631. MS-63+. Small obverse spot at 6:00. The coin realized \$8,800.
3. Paramount 4/79:746. MS-63. Obverse spots at 7:00 to 9:00.
4. The coin graded MS-63 by PCGS. Unseen by me; pedigree unknown.
- 5 (tie). 1979 ANA (New England Rare Coin Auctions):7 and two examples graded MS-62 by PCGS. All grade MS-62.

# 1851-O



Mintage: 290,000

## General Information:

The mintage figure for this issue is tied with the 1853-O as the highest recorded for any New Orleans gold dollar. However, this date is more difficult to obtain in all grades than the 1853-O.

Most examples are reasonably well struck although a number of survivors are weak on Liberty's hair, the second L in Liberty, and on the 5 in the date. Other pieces are somewhat blurry and show indistinct areas at the borders. This date usually has good lustre with the typical specimens showing rich frosty surfaces; a few are semi-prooflike. The coloration is often a warm orange-gold with a halo of deeper color noted at the peripheries.

All 1851-O gold dollars have a large mintmark. Two varieties are known. One has very heavily impressed stars while the other shows lighter, more delicate stars. Both appear to be of similar rarity.

This issue is easy to locate in all grades up to and including Choice About Uncirculated. Most of the known Uncirculated coins grade from MS-60 to MS-62. The 1851-O gold dollar becomes rare in MS-63 and gems are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 275-325

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
100-110 (R-4)	80-100 (High R-4)	55-65 (Mid R-5)	40-50 (Mid-High R-5)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 12/78:16, ex Bluestone 10/47. MS-65. A superb gem example.
2. Texas Collection, ex Jay (Stack's 10/67):197. MS-65.
- 3 (tie) Superior 1/89:7; the example handled by Jeff Notrica in 1989, and the example listed in Delaware Valley Rare Coin's 7/91 inventory. All three pieces were graded MS-64 by PCGS. One of these may have been reoffered as Mid American 8/91:606; an NGC MS-64 example.
4. Mid-American 1/86:1894 and Auction '81 (Paramount):1325. Both coins were very nice MS-63s.
- 5 (tie) A number of coins graded MS-63 by PCGS and NGC.



# 1852-O



Mintage: 140,000

## General Information:

The 1852-O is the second rarest gold dollar struck at the New Orleans Mint.

The quality of strike for this issue is not as sharp as found on some of the earlier issues. Liberty's hair tends to come weakly struck, especially on the curls along the neck and below the ear. The LLA in DOLLAR and the tops of the 85 in the date are also often found with weakness of strike. The lustre is quite good with a frosty texture most typically seen. The color ranges from medium green to a rich orange-gold.

All 1852-O gold dollars have a large mintmark as on the 1851-O. Two varieties are known. The first has a normal date. The second—which is scarcer—has light repunching on the base of the 1 in the date. Late die states show significant cracks on the obverse. The Akers plate coin (later sold as Lot 17 in the Eliasberg Sale) has particularly advanced cracks which are in a partial "wheel spoke" configuration.

Most known 1852-O gold dollars grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine. This issue becomes rare in About Uncirculated. Uncirculated coins are quite rare and are seldom seen above the MS-60+ level. Choice pieces are very rare and this date is extremely rare in any grade above MS-63.

## Rarity:

Total Known:125-135

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
50-56	32-33	24-26	19-20
(Mid R-5)	(High R-5)	(Low R-6/Mid R-6)	(Mid R-6)

## Condition Census:

1. Texas Collection, probably ex Jay (Stack's 10/67): 202. MS-65. Fully Prooflike.
2. Heritage 11/89:962. MS-64. Also graded MS-64 by PCGS.
3. Florida collection, ex California dealer (1991). PCGS MS-63 and nearly at the 64 level.
4. NERCA 11/79:1292. MS-63. Exceptionally well struck. The coin sold for \$1900.
- 5 (tie). A pair of pieces graded MS-62 by PCGS. One was sold by the author to a client in Mississippi.

# 1853-O



Mintage: 290,000

## General Information:

The 1853-O is, by a large margin, the most common New Orleans gold dollar. In lower grades, this issue does not carry much of a premium over the common Type I gold dollars from the Philadelphia Mint.

Most 1853-O gold dollars are very well struck. The hair and the center of the reverse may show some minor weakness but these regions are often much better detailed than on other New Orleans gold dollars of this era. The lustre is usually excellent with a frosty texture most often seen; semi-prooflike pieces exist but are scarce. The coloration tends to be a medium light green-gold with some pieces ranging in hue from light orange to bright yellow gold.

The mintmark is large as on the 1852-O. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This date is very easy to find in grades up to and including AU-58. Low-end Uncirculated pieces are not especially scarce and enough exist to suggest the existence of a decent-sized hoard. In Mint State-63, the 1853-O gold dollar becomes rare and full gems are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 450-500

Overall Rarity: High R-2/ Low R-3

By Grade:

VF  
175-225  
(R-3)

EF  
125-135  
(R-3)

AU  
85-90  
(R-4)

Mint State  
65-70  
(Low R-5)

## Condition Census:

1. Bowers and Merena 6/88:1280. MS-65. Identifiable by a small mark on the chin. Later graded MS-65 by PCGS and owned by Avena Coin Co., circa 12/90.
2. Superior 1/89:9, ex Auction '81 (Paramount):1333. MS-65. Later graded MS-65 by PCGS.
3. Stack's 1/86:25. MS-64. Later graded MS-64 by PCGS.
4. Stack's 10/79:2. MS-64.
- 5 (tie). Heritage 12/85:2055 and Eliasberg:21, ex Clapp and Mills (Chapman Brothers, 4/1904). Both coins grade MS-63.

# 1855-O



Mintage: 55,000

## General Information:

The 1855-O is doubly popular as a one-year type coin and as the final issue of this denomination to be struck at the New Orleans Mint.

The quality of strike for this issue is considerably better than that found on the 1855-C and the 1855-D gold dollars. The 1855-O is also found on much better planchets. The typical example shows weakness on the hair around the face of Liberty and, especially, on the 8 in the date and the LL in DOLLAR. The lustre is usually very good with a frosty texture most commonly seen. The coloration, particularly on uncleaned, high-grade pieces, is most often a warm orange-gold. Most pieces show moderate to heavy die clashing but, again, this is minimal in comparison to that seen on 1855-C and 1855-D gold dollars.

The mintmark is large and it tilts slightly to the left. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

The 1855-O is the most common mintmarked Type II gold dollar. And, it is the only mintmarked gold dollar of this type which is available in any quantity in Mint State. This issue is fairly common (and somewhat overrated) in lower grades. About Uncirculated pieces are fairly scarce but can be obtained. Average quality Mint State pieces are rare, while choice and gem examples are very rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 175-200

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
62-72	55-60	40-45	18-23
(Low R-5)	(Mid R-5)	(High R-5)	(Mid-High R-6)

## Condition Census:

1. Bowers and Merena 11/84:1279. MS-64+. Identifiable by a small spot below R in AMERICA. The coin realized \$17050.
2. Mid American 1/90:1941, ex Auction '83 (Superior) and Auction '79 (Superior): 1649. MS-63. Identifiable by two spots on the obverse. Graded MS-63/63 by ANACS on 9/3/85.
3. Stack's 1/86:33. MS-63. Similar in quality to the last. Identifiable by a spot below the second L in DOLLAR.
4. Mid American 1/88:1859, ex: Auction '81 (Rarcoa): 368. MS-63. Lightly spotted on the obverse.
- 5 (tie) Superior 1/89:257, Stack's 10/85:674 and the examples graded MS-63 by PCGS. All MS-63, but not quite as nice as coin #4.

## Rarity Summary: New Orleans Gold Dollars

<u>Date</u>	<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>High Grade</u>
1849-O	80-100	70-80	60-70	40-45	250-300	100-115
1850-O	35-39	27-30	19-20	9-11	90-100	28-31
1851-O	100-110	80-100	55-65	40-50	275-325	95-115
1852-O	50-56	32-33	24-26	19-20	125-135	43-46
1853-O	175-225	125-135	85-90	65-70	400-500	150-160
1855-O	62-72	55-60	40-45	18-23	175-200	58-68

### Overall Rarity

1. 1850-O
2. 1852-O
3. 1855-O
4. 1849-O
5. 1851-O
6. 1853-O

### High Grade Rarity\*

1. 1850-O
2. 1852-O
3. 1855-O
4. 1851-O
5. 1849-O
6. 1853-O

\* Coins which grade About Uncirculated and better.



Section  
**TWO**

## Quarter Eagles

I. Classic Head (1834-1839)

1839-O, 17,781

Total Mintage: 17,781

II. Liberty Head (1840-1907)

1840-O, 33,580

1842-O, 19,800

1843-O, 364,002

Total Small Date: 288,002

Total Large Date: 76,000

1845-O, 4,000

1846-O, 62,000

1847-O, 124,000

1850-O, 84,000

1851-O, 148,000

1852-O, 140,000

1854-O, 153,000

1856-O, 21,100

1857-O, 34,000

Total Mintage: 1,187,482

Combined Total Both Types: 1,205,263





# 1839-O



Mintage 17,781

## General Information:

This is a popular one year type coin. It is the only New Orleans quarter eagle with the classic head obverse design. As a result, this issue is in demand as a type coin.

Most 1839-O quarter eagles are not very well struck. As on nearly all issues of this type, the 1839-O shows weakness at the centers, especially on the curls around the face of Liberty as well as on the eagle's right leg and claws. On many pieces the reverse will display a weaker strike than on the obverse, making this a hard coin to accurately grade. The lustre is usually excellent with many high grade pieces showing very frosty surfaces. The coloration on such coins is often excellent with deep orange-gold the most typically seen hue. Circulated examples are more apt to show a rich green-gold color. Abrasions are a problem with this issue, and most 1839-O quarter eagles are heavily marked.

Two significant die varieties are known. The first has a high date with the 9 close to Liberty's curl and higher than the 3. On the reverse, there is no berry, the arrow shafts are disconnected, the fraction is wide, and the arrowheads are well formed. This is the more common of the two varieties. The second has a lower date with the 9 away from the curl and even with the 3 at the top. On the reverse, the berry is disconnected, the fraction is very close and the arrowheads are malformed. Late die states show severe cracks with an eventual shattering of the die. This variety is considerably scarcer than the first.

The 1839-O quarter eagle is the only New Orleans issue of this denomination which could be said to be overrated. It is rather easy to locate in lower grades and even About Uncirculated examples can be obtained without a great amount of effort. Mint State pieces exist in a quantity great enough to suggest the existence of a hoard. However,

most of these pieces grade no better than MS-62. A few very choice pieces exist and these are always in great demand.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 175-200

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
65-75	60-70	25-35	15-20
(Low R-5)	(Low R-5/High R-6)	(High R-5/Low R-6)	(High R-6)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '79 (Paramount):227, ex Max Humbert Collection. MS-65. The Akers plate coin; possibly the piece graded MS-64 by PCGS. This coin sold at auction for \$13,500 in 1979 and was resold in 1980 for \$35,000.
2. Texas Collection. MS-64 or better. Obtained in the 1950's.
3. (tie) Stack's 10/88:21 and Auction '83 (Paramount):304, ex Stack's 4/78:797. Both coins grade MS-63.
4. Garrett 2 (Bowers and Ruddy, 3/80):756, ex S. H. Chapman, 1919. MS-63. Graded AU-55 in the catalog but the coin sold for \$11,000.
5. (tie) A small group of pieces graded MS-63 by PCGS including Superior 10/89:3990 and others.

# 1840-O



Mintage 33,580

## General Information:

The 1840-O is one of the rarest and most underrated of all New Orleans quarter eagles.

Two significant varieties exist for this issue. The first has a large mintmark while the second (of which there are two important die varieties) has a small mintmark.

It is estimated that approximately 22,800 Large O 1840-O quarter eagles were struck. These pieces all show very poor strikes. The centers, on both the obverse and on the reverse, are often extremely soft. This variety is usually found struck in yellowish green-gold and shows inferior lustre.

The remaining 10,780 1840-O quarter eagles have a small mintmark. Actually, as the mintmark size on the "Large O" coins is very small, the so-called Small O coins could more rightfully be known as "Tiny O" pieces. This variety is believed to have been struck later in 1840 and probably includes some coins actually struck in 1841 but dated 1840. The quality of strike is better than that found on the Large O coins but it is still not of a very high quality. These pieces often have better lustre and a slightly lighter color than their counterparts. Two die varieties are known.

1. Fraction bar points to the space beyond the right side of the mintmark. Early die state pieces show die file marks (vertical) near the first two stars. Scarce but more available than the next.

2. Fraction bar points to the lower right side of the mintmark. This variety is very rare.

It is extremely difficult to locate an example of this date which grades higher than Very Fine. Extremely Fine pieces are rare while full About Uncirculateds are very rare. Mint State 1840-O quarter eagles are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
43-49	16-17	8-10	3-4
(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(High R-7/R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Texas Collection, ex Pierce:1102. MS-65. An amazing coin for the issue. Large O variety.
2. Bass Collection, ex; Eliasberg:115, Clapp, Ten Eyck (Mehl, 5/1922) MS-63 or better. Softly struck but very choice. Small O variety.
3. Bowers and Merena 1/90:499, ex Norweb 2 (Bowers and Merena 3/88):1968. MS-60. Later graded MS-60 by NGC and sold by Jeff Notrica to a southern specialist. Large O variety.
4. Eliasberg:116, Clapp, Mehl (1921). AU-55. Large O variety.
5. Massachusetts collector, ex the author (1992). NGC AU-58. Semi-prooflike with nice color; typical strike. Small O.

# 1842-O



Mintage 19,800

## General Information:

The 1842-O has one of the lowest mintages of any quarter eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint. It is one of the rarest individual dates within the New Orleans quarter eagle series.

The 1842-O always shows a very weak strike. The obverse tends to be quite soft at its centers while the stars are often flat. The reverse may be a bit bolder at the borders but it, too, will be very weak at the center. Luster is usually quite good on high grade pieces with a soft, satiny texture most prevalent. The coloration is often a medium green-gold with a few pieces showing more of a coppery-orange hue.

It appears that the 1842-O shares the reverse with one of the die varieties of the 1840-O Small O quarter eagle. The mintmark is extremely small and the fraction bar points to the lower right side of the O. A few late strikes show cracks through MERIC in AMERICA with these cracks terminating on the rim above the C in this word.

The great majority of extant 1842-O quarter eagles grade Very Fine. Extremely Fine pieces are rare and About Uncirculated examples are extremely rare. Only two or three strictly Mint State 1842-O quarter eagles are currently known to exist and none of these is really choice.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
41-42	15-17	7-8	2-3
(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(Mid R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. The example graded MS-61 by PCGS. This coined was owned by a New York dealer and was offered for sale in late 1990 for \$13,500. It was very well struck for the issue and was identifiable by a small flaw before Liberty's face.
2. The example graded MS-60 by PCGS. Owned by National Coin Investment (Paul Nugget) in early 1991 and later sold to Dick Appel. This coin was also graded AU-58 at least three times by PCGS and was also graded AU-58 at least once by NGC. It can be identified by a small semicircular planchet defect from the chin to between the first two stars. In my opinion, the coin is a full MS-60.
3. Auction '86 (Superior); 1346, ex Paul Taglione and, possibly, Bell 2:114. AU-55 or better.
4. Stack's 3/86:65. AU-55. Later graded AU-55 by NGC.
5. California collector, ex the author (1986). About Uncirculated -50 or better. Struck on a poor quality planchet but nearly free of wear.

# 1843-O Small Date



Mintage 288,002

## General Information:

The 1843-O Small Date is the most common New Orleans quarter eagle in terms of total number known and coins available in high grades.

The strike on this variety varies greatly. Some pieces show a good overall quality of strike but most are fairly weak, especially at the borders. Late die states have a somewhat "fuzzy" appearance and numerous heavy reverse cracks; especially through RICA in AMERICA. Other pieces have cracks which join many of the stars. The obverse often shows a group of three raised die lumps on Liberty's neck and jaw; the reverse almost always has a die chip in the right field between the wing and ME in AMERICA. The lustre on most examples is soft and satiny. The coloration is most typically a bright yellow gold and, less often, a medium green-gold.

Two die varieties exist. The first has a centered date and has the mintmark centered over the fraction. The second has a lower date, weak stars and a recut mintmark located over the left part of the fraction. This is the more common of the two varieties.

The 1843-O Small Date quarter eagle is common in all circulated grades. In Mint State, it is rare, although not nearly as much so as the other 1840's quarter eagles from this mint. A few very choice examples are known and these have spectacular eye appeal.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 200-250

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
72-75	40-50	25-35	12-15
(Low R-5)	(High R-5)	(High R-5/Low R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Bass Collection, ex Stack's 2/74:505. MS-65. Said to be among the finest known New Orleans quarter eagles of any date. Fully Prooflike and very unusual as such. This coin sold for a then-incredible \$2,000.
2. Midwestern collection, obtained via private treaty in 1981. MS-63+. The coin sold for \$12,500.
3. New Orleans collection. MS-63. Obtained from New Netherlands Coin Company in the 1950s. Superb coloration and strike.
4. The example graded MS-62 by PCGS. Very conservatively graded and MS-63 by the author's standards. This piece appears to be ex Stack's 1/89:714, Stack's 10/85:451.
5. (tie). A small number of pieces grading MS-60+. These include three PCGS MS-61s (as of June, 1992); Bowers and Merena 3/88:1980 and Mid American 1/87:1867.



# 1843-O Large Date



Mintage 76,000

## General Information:

For some unknown reason, PCGS and NGC do not recognize the existence of varieties among 1843-O quarter eagles. As a result, the 1843-O Large Date is a forgotten variety.

The quality of strike for this issue is generally mediocre. The obverse tends to display weakness on the curls around the face and below the ear. On the reverse, the eagle's left leg and claw are always very weak. There is often a patch of die rust on Liberty's throat and the reverse border is sometimes weak. The borders are noticeably wider on this variety than on the Small Date. The average piece has marginal lustre although some high-grade pieces are very frosty. The most typically seen coloration is green-gold; other pieces show a deep coppery orange hue. Most worn examples are heavily marked or have been cleaned.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

The 1843-O Large Date quarter eagle is most often found in low grades. This variety becomes very rare in About Uncirculated and strictly Mint State examples are extremely rare. I have never personally seen a piece which graded higher than MS-60 and only a few which even graded this high.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 90-95

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<b>VF</b>	<b>EF</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>Mint State</b>
52-54	22-23	12-13	4-5
(Mid R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Bareford (Stack's 12/78): 89, ex Stack's 10/51:1235. MS-60+ or slightly better.
2. Stack's 6/83: 16, ex Auction '79 (Paramount): 229. MS-60. Identifiable by marks near the third star.
3. Mid American 1/90:1956, ex Mid American 5/89:379. MS-60. Identifiable by some toning on the rim near the first star.
4. Auction '84 (Superior): 255. MS-60. Identifiable by a mark below the F in OF.
5. (tie). A small number of pieces which grade AU-55 to AU-58.

# 1845-O



Mintage 4,000

## General Information:

The 1845-O is one of the most highly regarded of all the gold coins struck at the New Orleans Mint. Because of the fact that the entire mintage was not delivered until January 22, 1846, no record of its existence was included in the 1845 New Orleans Mint Director's Annual Report.

This issue was a great favorite of B. Max Mehl's and was subjected to his inimitable (and successful) hype. Mehl was responsible for turning the 1845-O into a famous and high-priced issue. Auction records of over \$300 exist for this issue as far back as the 1930's; an incredible price for a branch mint gold coin at that time.

Most 1845-O quarter eagles are reasonably well struck. Some examples, though, do show weakness at their borders. Most show a mint-made depression on the obverse which runs from the area between the curls to the 13th star. This is the result of some foreign matter adhering to the die at the time of striking. Many pieces are prooflike, as one might expect from an issue with such a low mintage. The coloration is often a rich coppery orange-gold with a few pieces showing a lighter yellow gold hue.

All 1845-O quarter eagles have a sharply repunched 18 in the date. The mintmark is large and high. The numerator touches the middle of the mintmark at its base.

In terms of total numbers known, this issue is very slightly over-rated. However, it is an extremely rare coin in higher grades. Most examples grade Very Fine or lower and full Extremely Fine pieces are very rare. About Uncirculated 1845-O quarter eagles are extremely rare. Only one strictly Mint State piece is currently known.

## Rarity:

Total Known:55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

YF	EF	AU	Mint State
40-41	10-12	4-6	1
(High R-5)	(Low R-7)	(High R-7)	(Unique)

## Condition Census:

1. 1987 ANA (Bowers and Merena): 538, ex Brand I (Bowers and Merena, 10/83): 110. MS-60 or slightly better. The only fully Mint State example of this date. Now in a private collection.
2. Bowers and Merena 11/90:477, ex Kramer (Stack's, 12/88): 126, Auction '87 (Paramount): 386 and Bowers and Merena 6/86:149. AU-50+. Graded AU-50 by PCGS.
3. Eliasberg:135, ex Clapp, Sears. AU-50+. Identifiable by a spot between stars 1 and 2.
4. Bowers and Merena 3/88:1989. AU-50 or so. Later graded AU-50 by NGC.
5. Ruby III (Superior 2/75): 1007. AU-50. Identifiable by a mark on the face and another below the eagle's beak.

# 1846-O



Mintage 62,000

## General Information:

After its tiny emission of quarter eagles in 1845, the New Orleans Mint increased its production in 1846 to 62,000 pieces.

Nearly all 1846-O quarter eagles are softly struck, although not as much so as the next few issues from this mint. The obverse is generally sharper than the reverse, although the curls around the face often lack crisp detail. The reverse is always weak on the eagle's claws, left leg, and neck. The quality of lustre on this date is often inferior and tends toward a subdued frostiness. The coloration ranges from a medium green hue to a brighter orange-gold.

The mintmark is high and positioned to the left of the fraction bar. It has long been claimed that an 1846/44-O Overdate exists. In my opinion, such pieces are *not* overdates, although a few early die state coins do exist which show clear repunching on the base of all four numerals in the date. Since no quarter eagles were struck at the New Orleans Mint in 1844, it seems unlikely that any obverse dies bearing this date were produced. Coins are known which show rotated reverses, usually at a 45° orientation.

The 1846-O quarter eagle is a much scarcer date than is generally realized. The majority of surviving examples grade Very Fine. Extremely Fine coins are scarce while full About Uncirculated pieces are genuinely rare. Mint State 1846-O quarter eagles are extremely rare and none of the small handful which exist grade higher than MS-60.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 100-110

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
58-63	24-26	15-17	3-4
(Low R-5/Mid R-5)	(Low R-6/Mid R-6)	(High R-6)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Eliasberg:139, ex Clapp, Mills (Chapman Brothers, 4/1904). MS-60+. Well struck for the issue.
2. The example graded MS-60 by PCGS. Unseen by the author but reliably reported to be very choice for the grade.
3. Auction '80 (Paramount):892, ex Superior 6/78:1667. MS-60. Struck from a rotated reverse.
4. Superior 10/90:2389, ex Stack's 1/90:682, NY-NJ Auction Sale, 3/59:353. PCGS AU-58. Technically a Mint State coin but with some rubbing on the obverse.
5. Illinois collector, ex the author in 1992. NGC AU-58. Well struck, clean and frosty.

# 1847-O



Mintage 124,000

## General Information:

The 1847-O quarter eagle is a much scarcer date than its relatively large mintage figure would suggest. It is, in fact, comparable in overall rarity to the 1847-C and it is a much rarer coin in high grades.

All known examples are poorly struck. The obverse is often weak on the stars at the left and always on the curls around the face of Liberty. The reverse is always weak on the eagle's right leg, the claws and, less often, on the tip of the right wing. 1847-O quarter eagles often show poor lustre with satiny, slightly grainy surfaces most typically seen. The coloration ranges from medium green-gold to orange-gold. The surfaces are often heavily abraded and mark-free examples are extremely scarce.

Three significant die varieties are known to exist. They are described as follows:

1. Normal date and mintmark. Late die states show a bisecting horizontal die crack which runs from the third star across the portrait to the 11th star. This variety is, by far, the most common of the three.

2. Normal date; mintmark sharply doubled at its base. Late die states show some fine cracks through the value. This variety is the rarest of the three.

3. Sharply doubled 18 in the date; normal mintmark. On late die states, the repunching fades and may be visible only on the 8. Scarce.

While not all that hard to obtain in Very Fine to Extremely Fine, the 1847-O is very rare in About Uncirculated and is extremely rare in Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 110-120

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
63-71	25-27	14-16	5-6
(Low R-5)	(Low R-6)	(High R-6)	(Mid R-6)

## Condition Census:

1. The example graded MS-63 by PCGS. Unseen by the author.
2. The example purchased by the author and Jeff Notrica at the October, 1991 Long Beach show. The coin had earlier been in a southern collection. MS-62 or slightly better; graded MS-62 by PCGS. Softly struck but extremely choice. Now in a Massachusetts collection.
3. Private collector, ex Dick Appel. PCGS MS-62. Pedigree unknown.
4. Eliasberg: 143, ex Clapp, Ten Eyck (Mehl, 5/1922). MS-60+. Possibly the same as coin #3.
5. Texas collection. MS-60 or so. Obtained in the early 1960's.



# 1850-O



Mintage 84,000

## General Information:

Despite its relatively high mintage and low catalog value, the 1850-O quarter eagle is a genuinely scarce and very underrated issue. In fact, it is probably the most underrated New Orleans quarter eagle in AU-50 and higher grades.

This is one of the more difficult New Orleans quarter eagles to find with any amount of sharpness. The strike is inevitably weak at the centers with the reverse sometimes appearing “blurry” and worn even on high-grade pieces. The typical lustre is dull and somewhat satiny although a few of the choicer known survivors do show good lustre. The coloration is most often a medium green-gold and, less often, a lighter yellow gold hue. The surfaces are typically heavily abraded and many examples have been cleaned.

Although it has been stated that three die varieties exist, I have seen only two. On the first, the mintmark is centered over the fraction bar while on the second it is to the right of the fraction. The latter appears to be the scarcer of the two.

Most 1850-O quarter eagles grade Very Fine or lower. Nice Extremely Fine pieces are rare while About Uncirculated coins are very rare. Mint State 1850-O quarter eagles are extremely rare although a few choice pieces do exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 105-115

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
67-70	26-29	8-10	4-6
(Low R-5)	(Low R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Specimen discovered in Europe in 1989 and sold by Heritage to a client for \$11,000. Graded MS-63 by PCGS. Flat on stars 1,3,4, and 7; deep yellow-gold color.
2. Private collection. PCGS graded MS-62. Very sharply struck for the issue. Either this coin or specimen #1 was graded MS-62 by NGC on two different occasions.
3. Chicago collection, ex Bell 2:144. MS-60. Nearly choice but very softly struck.
4. Eliasberg:155, ex Clapp, Earle (H. Chapman, 6/1912). MS-60. Identifiable by an obverse edge mark at 9:00.
5. (tie) A number of AU-55 specimens are known including Norweb II (Bowers and Merena 3/88): 2008; Stack's 5/89:65 and Fairfield (Bowers and Merena 10/77):1522.

# 1851-O



Mintage 148,000

## General Information:

The 1851-O has the second highest figure of any quarter eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint. In terms of total numbers known to exist, this is not a really rare issue. But, high grade examples are much more elusive than is generally realized.

The obverse on most 1851-O quarter eagles shows a better quality of strike than on other New Orleans issues of this era and denomination. The reverse, however, is usually quite softly struck with visible weakness on the eagle's right leg, the shield, the claws, and the neck. Sometimes, the wingtips are weak enough to give the impression of wear on high-grade pieces. The coloration ranges from orange-gold to a deep green hue. The lustre is usually frosty and somewhat subdued although a handful of pieces exist which are semi prooflike.

Varieties are known with a normal date and a significantly doubled date. On the normal date coins, the mintmark is either placed over the fraction bar or further to the left, above the numerator. On the double date variety, the date was first punched sloping down to the right and was then effaced. The bottoms of the initial 51 can still be seen in the field to the left of the second 51. I have seen very few examples of this date which did not have a doubled date. Some 1851-O quarter eagles show rotated reverse including a few with full medalllic alignment of the dies (i.e., 180° rotation).

Nearly all surviving examples grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine. This date is rare and undervalued in About Uncirculated, and Mint State pieces are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 110-120

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
61-66	31-33	14-16	4-5
(Low R-5)	(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Bowers and Merena 3/91:1402. MS-64. Later graded MS-64 by PCGS and NGC. Purchased at the aforementioned auction by Heritage. At the 1991 ANA convention, NGC upgraded this coin to MS-65. Identifiable by some light marks over the head of the eagle.
2. Mid American 8/91:655. NGC graded MS-62. Satiny with rich yellow gold color. It appears that this coin was twice graded MS-62 by NGC.
3. Auction '83 (Stack's): 793, ex Stack's 1/81:814 and Auction '79 (Stack's): 769. MS-60+.
4. Superior 9/88:5230. MS-60 or so. Identifiable by spots below O in OF and below stars 9-11.
5. Illinois collector, ex the author in 1991. NGC AU-58. Well struck and very close to full Mint State.

# 1852-O



Mintage 140,000

## General Information:

The 1852-O has one of the highest mintages of any quarter eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint. But, just as with the silver coinage of this date and mint, this issue appears to have been heavily melted. As a result, it is far scarcer than is generally believed.

The 1852-O quarter eagle is often much better struck than the 1850-O or the 1851-O. Most examples, though, will show some weakness on the curls around the face of Liberty and on the right leg of the eagle. The lustre is generally very good with most high-grade pieces showing rich frost. The coloration is most often a mellow orange-gold or, less often, a deep medium green-gold. It is very difficult to locate pieces which are not heavily marked.

Two die varieties are known. The first (which is far more common) has a normal mintmark. The second (which was first reported by me in the catalogue description of the Ivy "Phoenix" Sale in 1982) has an unusually formed and very heavy mintmark. It is similar to that found on the 1854-O "Huge O" quarter dollar and it is possible that this mintmark may have been added to a Philadelphia reverse at the New Orleans Mint.

Very Fine and Extremely Fine 1852-O quarter eagles are not really rare but are certainly undervalued at current market levels. About Uncirculated pieces are very scarce. In Mint State, this issue is extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 95-105

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<b>VF</b>	<b>EF</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>Mint State</b>
46-49 (Mid R-5)	32-36 (High R-5)	15-17 (High R-6)	2-3 (R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 10/85:454. MS-62 to MS-63. Semi prooflike and struck in yellow gold. The coin sold for \$4620.
2. Texas Collection. MS-60
3. Stack's 6/91:1712. AU-58. Lightly worn. Later graded AU-58 by PCGS.
4. Heritage 7/84:61, exNERCA 11/77:859. AU-55+. Identifiable by a mark near star 12.
5. (tie) A number of AU-55's including four graded by PCGS as of April, 1992; one of these was owned by Dick Appel in 1991 while another was in the author's inventory and was sold to an Illinois collector in 1992.

# 1854-O



Mintage 153,000

## General Information:

The 1854-O has the second highest mintage figure of any quarter eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint. It is one of the more common issues within this series but it is still far from being the “common” date which most pricing guides purport it to be.

This is one of the best struck of all New Orleans Liberty Head gold coins. Most specimens show virtually complete definition around the face of Liberty and sharp details on the eagle’s wings and legs. Most seen were struck from lightly to heavily clashed dies; the clashmarks are most often seen around the head of Liberty. The surface texture ranges from very frosty to almost wholly rooflike. Many high-grade 1854-O quarter eagles show superb coloration and have strong contrast between the frosted devices and the fields. Others show visible rust at the borders which gives even more of a contrasted appearance.

No significant die varieties are known although it is claimed that there are pieces with a “light date” and a “heavy date.” This is related to quality of strike as pieces with the aforementioned die rust tend to have weaker dates than those without it.

The 1854-O quarter eagle is common enough in Very Fine and Extremely Fine and is not all that hard to locate in the lower About Uncirculated grades. Mint State pieces are rare and seldom grade higher than MS-62. A number of choice 1854-O quarter eagles were included in the Jackson, Tennessee hoard which was uncovered in 1985 and dispersed through the late 1980’s.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 150-175

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
73-86 (R-4)	47-55 (Mid R-5)	20-22 (Mid R-6)	10-12 (Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

(Note: Since many high-grade examples of this date went directly from the Jackson, TN. hoard into private collections, this list is missing a number of potential Condition Census specimens)

1. Paramount 2/77:588. MS-65. The Akers plate coin. Among the finest known New Orleans quarter eagles of any date.
2. Auction '85 (Rarcoa): 375. MS-63. Deep prooflike obverse and reverse.
3. Mid American 5/92:1353. MS-62 to MS-63. Later graded MS-62 by NGC. Sold to the author and Lee Minshall.
4. The example graded MS-62 by PCGS. Possibly the same coin as #2.
5. (tie). Superior 7/88:322, ex Stack's 3/86:104; Mid American 9/86:1117 and a few other pieces. All grade MS-60 or slightly better. PCGS has graded three pieces in MS-60 as of April, 1992.



# 1856-O



Mintage 21,100

## General Information:

After the relatively high mintages of 1851, 1852 and 1854, production of the New Orleans quarter eagles was reduced to a scant 21,100 pieces in 1856.

This date typically comes rather well struck for a New Orleans quarter eagle. One can expect to find some weakness at the centers but not as much so as on the coins of this denomination which were struck in the 1840's. Sometimes, the base of the date and the corresponding reverse will show some minor weakness of strike as will the final two or three stars. The lustre on the typical example is frosty and above average. Coloration ranges from vibrant yellow gold to a more subdued green-gold hue.

All known examples have a small date. Two die varieties are known. On the first, the mintmark is fully visible. On the second, the top left portion is covered by a feather. The first variety is the rarer of the two.

After having been ignored for years, this date has finally received some acclaim. It is hard to locate even in Very Fine and nice Extremely Fine pieces are very scarce. About Uncirculated 1856-O quarter eagles are very rare while fully Mint State pieces are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: High R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
40-41	21-22	12-14	2-3
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 1/90:721. PCGS graded MS-61. Sold to a private collector, after it was slabbed, by Jeff Notrica.
2. Kramer (Stack's 12/88):156. MS-60 or so. Later graded AU-58 by PCGS and owned by a New York dealer in early 1991.
3. Fairfield:1554. AU-55 or better.
4. Heritage 2/86:1462, ex Paramount 5/82:1243. AU-55 or better. Just a hair less choice than #3.
5. (tie). A small number of AU-55's including the PCGS AU-55 coin offered as Heritage 1/91:559 (later sold as Bowers and Merena 5/92:1446) and the example graded AU-58 by NGC and owned by a New Jersey dealer as of 8/91 (later sold by Heritage 2/27/92:5616).

# 1857-O



Mintage 34,000

## General Information:

The 1857-O is the final quarter eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint.

This issue is not as well struck as the 1854-O or the 1856-O quarter eagles. The obverse is always soft on the curls around the face of Liberty and on the hair around and behind her ear. The reverse is even weaker than the obverse with the right leg of the eagle, the shield and the claws showing weak detail. The lustre is usually good with many pieces showing semiprooflike to nearly fully prooflike fields. The coloration is most often a medium yellow-gold or a somewhat deeper green-gold.

No significant die varieties are known. The reverse appears to be leftover from 1856 as the mintmark is partially hidden by the feather at its left top.

At one time, this date was extremely rare in high grades. While it is still scarce, a quantity (20-30 pieces?) were discovered in a small hoard which turned up in Jackson, Tennessee in 1985. But, nearly all of these pieces graded Extremely Fine to About Uncirculated and fully Uncirculated coins are very rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 120-130

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
45-49	45-47	25-28	5-6
(Mid R-5/High R-5)	(Mid R-5/High R-5)	(Low R-6)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Southern collection, ex Jackson, Tennessee hoard. MS-63. The finest coin from the hoard; unseen by the author but confirmed by a reliable source.
2. Superior 1/86:2915, ex Stack's 4/78:803. MS-62; later graded MS-62 by both PCGS and NGC.
3. Dick Appel inventory, purchased in 1991. PCGS MS-61.
4. Texas Collection, probably ex Merkin 9/67:333. MS-60; weakly struck but fully prooflike.
5. (tie). A number of AU-58 pieces including three graded as such by PCGS as of April, 1992. One was sold by Bowers and Merena as 5/92:1447.

## Rarity Summary: New Orleans Quarter Eagles

Date	VF	EF	AU	Mint State	Total	High Grade
1839-O	65-75	60-70	25-35	15-20	175-200	40-55
1840-O	43-44	16-17	8-10	3-4	70-75	11-14
1842-O	41-42	15-17	7-8	2-3	65-70	9-11
1843-O	SD72-75	40-50	25-35	12-15	200-250	37-50
1843-O	LD52-54	22-23	12-13	4-5	90-85	16-18
1845-O	40-41	10-12	4-6	1	55-60	5-7
1846-O	58-63	24-26	15-17	3-4	100-110	18-22
1847-O	63-71	25-27	14-16	5-6	110-120	19-22
1850-O	67-70	26-29	8-10	4-6	105-115	12-16
1851-O	61-66	31-33	14-16	4-5	110-120	18-21
1852-O	46-49	32-36	15-17	2-3	95-105	17-20
1854-O	73-86	47-55	20-22	10-12	150-175	30-34
1856-O	40-41	21-22	12-14	2-3	75-80	14-17
1857-O	45-49	45-47	25-28	5-6	120-130	30-34

### Overall Rarity

1. 1845-O
2. 1842-O
3. 1840-O
4. 1856-O
5. 1843-O LD
6. 1852-O
7. 1846-O
8. 1850-O
9. 1847-O
- 9(tie) 1851-O
11. 1857-O
12. 1854-O
13. 1839-O
14. 1843-O SD

### High Grade Rarity\*

1. 1845-O
2. 1842-O
3. 1840-O
4. 1850-O
5. 1856-O
6. 1843-O LD
7. 1852-O
8. 1851-O
9. 1846-O
10. 1847-O
11. 1854-O
- 11(tie) 1857-O
- 1843-O SD
14. 1839-O

\* Coins grading About Uncirculated and better.



Section  
**THREE**

# Three-Dollar Gold



# 1854-O



Mintage 24,000

The New Orleans Mint struck three-dollar gold pieces only in 1854. Like the 1854-D, this issue is in demand as a one-year type coin. Unlike the 1854-D, this issue exists in fairly large numbers.

Most 1854-O three-dollar gold pieces are poorly struck. Even the sharpest known examples are apt to show some weakness in the centers. Liberty's hair is always weak and the top of the date is seldom full. The lustre is usually poor and high grade examples are most often satiny; a few semiprooflike coins are known but these are very scarce. The typical coloration is a pale yellow-gold color; some pieces show a deeper green-gold hue.

Two distinct die varieties are known. The first of these shows sharp lettering and a nearly full mintmark. The designer's initials (JBL) are strong. Most pieces show green-gold color and late die states show strong die clashing within the wreath. The second variety, which is more common than the first, has weaker lettering and a fainter date and mintmark. About half of the designer's initials can be seen and the ribbon is often weak. Late die states show cracks through the mintmark, the ribbon, and, less frequently, the letters in AMERICA.

This issue is very common in low grades. It becomes rare in AU-50 and it is extremely rare in the higher AU grades. Fully Mint State examples are of the highest rarity and I have never seen a piece which would qualify as such by today's standards.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 200-250

Overall Rarity: High R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
130-150	60-87	10-13	0
(Mid R-4)	High R-4/Mid R-5	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '81 (RARCOA): 387, ex Bowers and Ruddy 6/74:1006. AU-58+. Toned around the edges, especially on the obverse from 6:00 to 9:00. Just a hair shy of Mint State.
2. The specimen graded AU-58 by PCGS. This coin was supposedly offered to a New York dealer at the summer 1990 Dallas coin show at a ridiculously cheap price but, inexplicably, this dealer passed on the coin(!) It is now owned by a southern collector.
3. Mid American 5/86:1908, ex Auction '84 (Paramount): 880, Garrett (1980): 418. AU-55+. The Akers plate coin. Superbly toned and the sharpest struck example I have ever seen.
4. (tie). Paramount 2/75:505 and four pieces graded AU-55 by PCGS. It is unlikely that more than three or four separate examples exist in this grade.





## Section FOUR

# Half Eagles

### I. Without Motto (1840-1866)

1840-O, 40,120

Broad Mill= 4,620

Narrow Mill= 35,500

1842-O, 16,400

1843-O, 101,075

Small Letters= 19,075

Large Letters=82,000

1844-O, 364,600      1854-O, 46,000

1845-O, 41,000      1855-O, 11,100

1846-O, 58,000      1856-O, 10,000

1847-O, 12,000      1857-O, 13,000

1851-O, 41,000

Total Mintage: 754,295

### II. With Motto (1866-1907)

1892-O, 10,000

1893-O, 110,000

1894-O, 16,600

Total Mintage: 136,000

Combined Total Both Types 890,295



# 1840-O



Mintage (all varieties): 40,120

## General Information:

The first 1840-O half eagles were struck in January 1840. All of these pieces, along with small batches produced in February and March, employed a Broad Mill border as found on all 1839 half eagles. A total of 4,620 Broad Mill 1840-O half eagles were made.

These coins can be distinguished by having a border which is approximately 22.5mm in diameter. Most known examples are reasonably well struck although few show complete detail on the eagle's legs and claws. The typical coloration is a rich orange-gold shade and the lustre tends to be frosty and somewhat grainy. Most Broad Mill 1840-O half eagles are very well worn and have either been cleaned or have numerous marks on the surfaces. All known examples have a large, oval mintmark which is positioned over the VE in FIVE.

The 1840-O Broad Mill half eagle is very rare in all grades. It is probable that no more than two dozen or so examples exist and nearly all of these grade from Fine to Very Fine. No Mint State pieces are known and About Uncirculated examples are exceedingly rare.

The remaining 35,500 1840-O half eagles are of the so-called "Narrow Mill" variety. These represent a subtle design change which occurred on half eagles in 1840. The borders were reduced approximately .5 to .7mm. The borders of New Orleans half eagles, however, are noticeably more broad than on many of the post-1840 Charlotte and Dahlonega issues. It is more accurate, therefore, to call the New Orleans half eagles "medium mill" coins. For further information on this under-researched subject, see David Bowers' "An Essay on Coin Diameters" which appears on page 265 of Bowers and Merena's catalogue of the Norweb I auction of October 1987.

The 1840-O "Narrow Mill" half eagles are generally among the best struck of all the branch mint coins of this denomination struck in 1840. The centers are typically somewhat flat (and are sometimes very flat),

but the borders are almost always sharp. The coloration is most often a rich green-gold or a lighter orange-gold. Examples are frequently seen with coppery toning. The surface texture is often frosty and slightly grainy, and higher grade examples have rather good lustre.

Two varieties are known. The first has the same reverse as on the Broad Mill variety. The second has a small, round mintmark which is positioned over the V in FIVE. It appears that the second variety is considerably scarcer than the first.

The 1840-O is not a hard coin to locate in lower grades. Choice, original Extremely Fine pieces are not easy to locate and full About Uncirculated examples are quite rare. Mint State 1840-O half eagles are extremely rare. The Broad Mill variety of this issue is one of the rarest of all New Orleans gold coins and it is extremely underrated.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 115-125

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
53-57	47-50	13-15	2-3
(Mid R-5)	(Mid R-5)	(High R-6)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Milas Collection, probably ex Auction '88 (Rarcoa): 1910. MS-60+. Possibly also graded MS-62 by PCGS. Narrow Mill; Large oval O over VE in FIVE. Small obverse mark in the field between stars 1 and 2. This coin was graded MS-62 by NGC in 1992.
2. Smithsonian Collection. MS-60+. Narrow Mill, Large oval O over VE in FIVE.
3. Eliasberg:415. AU-58. Narrow Mill; Small round O over V in FIVE. Mint error; edge half reeded, half plain. Small planchet defect on the chin of Liberty.
4. Auction '86 (Superior):1391; Eliasberg:414, ex Clapp, Chapman. AU-55+. Broad Mill, Large oval O. Toned at the 184 in the date. The finest known example of this variety.
5. (tie). Heritage 1/91:593 (graded AU-53 by PCGS) and Bowers and Merena 1/91:153 (later graded AU-55 by PCGS). Both grade AU-55 or slightly better. Both were of the Narrow Mill variety.

NOTE: The "1841-O" half eagle does not exist. For more information on this, see Akers half eagles, page 106.

# 1842-O



Mintage 16,400

## General Information:

While the Philadelphia, Charlotte, and Dahlonega half eagles of this year are found with two varieties each (all show variations in the lettering size and the southern issues have two different date sizes), the 1842-O is found solely with a small date and small letters. All known pieces show a fairly Broad Mill, although not as much so as on the 1842-C and 1842-D Large Date varieties.

The typical 1842-O half eagle is better detailed than the other branch mint issues of this date and denomination. Some pieces show some minor weakness of strike on the curls below BERT in LIBERTY and on the corresponding reverse. Most examples are found with deep greenish color and are apt to show heavily abraded surfaces. Since so few examples exist which display any amount of mint lustre, it is nearly impossible to describe what the "typical" texture should look like. High-grade examples are known which are prooflike and some frosty pieces exist as well.

All 1842-O half eagles have a small round mintmark positioned above the right side of the V in FIVE.

This is one of the rarest New Orleans half eagles. It is comparable in overall rarity to the more highly regarded 1842-D Large Date; although not quite as much so in high grades. On the average, only one piece per year appears for sale at auctions and most known examples are heavily worn. This issue is extremely rare in full Extremely Fine, excessively rare in About Uncirculated and it is unique in Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 35-40

Overall Rarity: High R-5/Low R-6

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
23-24	8-10	3-5	1
(Mid R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(High R-7/R-8)	(Unique)

## Condition Census:

1. Milas Collection, ex Eliasberg:424, Clapp, Earle. MS-62 to 63. Identifiable by an obverse toning spot at the final star and a reverse spot at the IT in UNITED. The finest known by a huge margin. Graded MS-63 by NGC in 1992.
2. Pierce:1333. AU-55 but struck on a poorly prepared planchet. Unseen by the author but verified by a reliable source.
3. Mid American 8/91:408. EF-45. A bit weakly struck on the reverse but lustrous and attractive. This coin sold for \$7,975 to a New York dealer.
4. The example graded AU-50 by ANACS in 1990. I graded this coin EF-45 when I viewed it.
5. (tie). The example graded EF-40 by PCGS (owned by a New York dealer in 1991) and Scanlon (Stack's 10/73):2284. Both grade EF-40.

# 1843-O



Small Letters: 19,075



Large Letters: 82,000

Total Mintage 101,075 all varieties

## General Information:

It has long been assumed that because of its much "smaller" mintage figure, the Small Letters variety of this issue is considerably rarer than its Large Letters counterpart. This is not the case. For example, between 1980 and 1990, a total of 39 1843-O half eagles were sold at auction. Of these, 18 were of the Large Letters variety while 21 had small letters; hardly the ratio one would expect from the reported mintage figures. It is my opinion that the Large Letters is actually the scarcer variety of the two and that its original mintage figure was somewhere in the area of 47,500 coins. The probable mintage figure for the Small Letters is, thus, somewhere in the area of 53,575 coins.

The Small Letters pieces were struck first and they employ the small O reverse of 1842. The quality of strike for this variety is not very good, especially in the centers. Most known examples are very heavily bagmarked and dull with a deep greenish color. On some pieces, stars five through nine are weakly impressed and give the impression of being slightly "faded" at their tops. A small quantity of "seawater" pieces are known. These come from a Confederate transport that was salvaged sometime in the early 1970s. These pieces show Mint State detail but have dull mattelike surfaces.

The Large Letters coins were struck later in 1843 and have a large mintmark which is positioned over the VE in FIVE. This variety is

usually well struck and has very sharp centers. Some pieces have raised wire rims, especially on the lower portion of the obverse rim. The typical coloration is a light yellow gold with some pieces a bit deeper and shading more towards greenish gold. Almost all known examples are heavily abraded; those which are lustrous have attractive frosty surfaces. Late die state coins show a thinning of stars seven to 10, a crack from star twelve towards the device, and considerable weakness on the tops of the letters in UNITED and the RICA in AMERICA. Die cracks join many of the letters and ultimately become very strong.

While these two issues are very close in overall rarity, most of the non-seawater high-grade 1843-O half eagles are of the Large Letters variety. Both issues are usually found in Very Fine. Extremely Fine pieces are scarce, though not overly so. About Uncirculated coins are very rare while fully Mint State 1843-O half eagles are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

(NOTE: These figures represent both the Small Letters and the Large Letters varieties)

Total Known: 125-150

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
78-94	33-40	12-13	2-3
(R-4)	(High R-5)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Mid American 8/91:697. NGC graded MS-63. Large Letters. Identifiable by three diagonal driftmarks on the cheek of Liberty and some light mint-made scratches at the center of the obverse. The coin sold for \$42,900 and is now in the Milas Collection.
2. Kagin's "Classic Gold Rarities" Fixed Price List (1983) at \$8,500, ex Eliasberg:429, Clapp, Woodin. MS-60+. Large Letters. The obverse was very choice; the reverse had marks below ES in STATES.
3. Heritage 6/89:1388. PCGS graded MS-60. Large Letters. Bagmarked and with an obverse scratch. Currently owned by Dick Appel.
4. Milas Collection, ex Eliasberg:430, Clapp, Mitchelson. Small Letters. AU-55. The finest known example of this variety.
5. H. C. Dodson Collection, Mid-American Rare Coin Auctions, May 1992. AU-55. Large Letters. Very lightly worn. Identifiable by light marks in the left obverse field and two small pinpricks after the D in UNITED.



# 1844-O



Mintage: 364,600

## General Information:

1844 was a record setting year in terms of the production of New Orleans half eagles. A total of 364,600 pieces were struck; this represents close to half of the entire mintage for all 12 of the No Motto issues of this denomination and mint. Only one other gold coin struck in New Orleans—the 1847-O Eagle—had a higher mintage than the 1844-O half eagle.

Most 1844-O half eagles are well struck although many show weakness on the curls. The lustre of this issue tends to be the best seen on any New Orleans half eagle, and it ranges from very frosty to nearly full prooflike. Many high-grade pieces show superb coloration with rich orange-gold and/or greenish hues predominant.

All pieces have a large mintmark which is positioned above the VE in FIVE. Two distinct varieties are known to exist. The more common of these has normal stars; late die states show patches of rust on the reverse. The rarer variety has thin stars (especially the fourth through the seventh and the 11th and 12th) which are the result of a lapped die. Later die states show some cracks on the reverse and the rare latest die state has a totally cracked reverse.

As one might expect, this is the most common New Orleans half eagle. It is also one of the more readily available mintmarked half eagles of the No Motto type. Very Fine and Extremely Fine pieces are plentiful and low-end About Uncirculated coins can be located without great effort. This issue becomes scarce in AU-55, and fully Mint State pieces are genuinely rare. A few very pleasing examples are known but this issue is extremely rare in MS-63 and unknown finer than this.

A single Proof is known to exist. It is part of a partial 1844-O gold Proof set (which also includes the currently untraced eagle) and was once owned by William Woodin and was earlier sold as Lot 1152 in the

June, 1890 Parmelee Collection sale. This coin is now owned by a prominent Texas collector and, in my opinion, it is the single most significant New Orleans gold coin in existence.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 225-250

Overall Rarity: Low R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
110-114	70-79	35-40	10-12
(R-4)	(High R-4/Low R-5)	(High R-5)	(Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Texas Collection, ex Kosoff (1959 private sale), Woodin, Parmelee:1152. Proof-65 or better. A superb gem with exceptional contrast and full mirrorlike fields. The earliest known branch mint Proof gold coin and the finest quality early United States Proof gold coin I have ever seen.
2. Milas Collection, ex Eliasberg:434. MS-63. Thin stars variety. Superb coloration. Graded MS-64 by NGC in 1992.
3. (tie). 1982 ANA:1053 and Auction '83 (Rarcoa):1424. Both grade MS-62 to MS-63. The first example is fully prooflike.
4. (tie). Auction '89 (Superior):894, ex Auction '88 (Superior):379; Stack's 3/89:229 and Mid American 8/91:700. MS-62. The first example was later graded MS-62 by PCGS while the last was graded MS-62 by NGC.
5. (tie). A small number of MS-60 (or slightly better) coins which include Auction '88 (Rarcoa):1912 and Stack's 12/78:168, ex Stack's 10/47:1266.

# 1845-O



Mintage: 41,000

## General Information:

The 1845-O is among the more common No Motto New Orleans half eagles. But, it is still a difficult coin to obtain, particularly in higher grades.

As a rule, examples of this date are well struck. Some show weakness on the curls around LIBERTY. For some reason, this issue is almost always found with extensive abrasions. The lustre is usually good with most high-grade pieces showing a frosty texture; a few are known which are semi-prooflike. The coloration is usually a medium green-gold hue with a smaller number showing a lighter yellow gold tint.

The reverse appears to have been leftover from 1844 as the mintmark is similar in size and shape to that found on the Normal Stars 1844-O half eagle. It is positioned over the VE in FIVE. Many pieces show raised die scratches on the reverse in the area between MERI in AMERICA and the denticles. These eventually fade.

Two varieties are known. The first has a perfect date. On the second, the 18 in the date is sharply repunched. Although the second variety is considerably scarcer, it seldom—if ever—sells for a premium.

The 1845-O half eagle is not a difficult issue to locate in Very Fine or Extremely Fine grades. It becomes rare in About Uncirculated and most of the existing pieces at this grade level are heavily bagmarked. In full Mint State this date is extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 100-110

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
52-55	32-37	13-14	3-4
(Mid R-5)	(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(High R-7/R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Bass Collection, ex Gilhousen (Superior 2/73):397. MS-65. A gem and one of the finest known New Orleans half eagles of any date.
2. 1979 ANA (New England Rare Coin Auctions):163. MS-63. Identifiable by a spot on the left wing. Very well struck. The coin realized \$8,400.
3. The example graded MS-62 by PCGS. Unseen by the author and currently untraced. Possibly (though not likely) the same coin as #2.
4. Texas Collection. MS-60 or so.
5. (tie). Stack's 2/78:1126, ex Stack's 3/74 and Mid American 8/91:431. Both grade AU-55. The second coin was purchased by the author, submitted to PCGS (where it was graded AU-55) and then sold to a California collector.

# 1846-O



Mintage: 58,000

## General Information:

The 1846-O half eagle is usually lumped with the 1845-O in terms of its rarity. However, the 1846-O is a much scarcer coin. In my opinion, it is as rare a coin as the more highly regarded 1846-C half eagle.

Most examples are well struck although, like any New Orleans half eagle of this era, it is nearly impossible to find a piece which does not have some weakness of strike on the curls around the face of Liberty. A number of examples show the letter E in LIBERTY with severe weakness. This may be due to a clogged die. The coloration is usually a deep green-gold although some of the higher grade pieces which are known have a pale orange-gold hue. The surfaces of the typical 1846-O half eagle show numerous abrasions although not to the degree as seen on 1845-O half eagles. Lustre is usually good with a frosty texture most often seen; a few slightly prooflike pieces exist.

All 1846-O half eagles have a large date and a large mintmark which is positioned over the VE in FIVE. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This is a rare issue in all grades. It is most often seen in Very Fine and nice Extremely Fine pieces are very hard to locate. About Uncirculated 1846-O half eagles are very rare while fully Mint State coins are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: High R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

<b>VF</b>	<b>EF</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>Mint State</b>
44-45	19-20	10-12	2-3
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(Low R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Milas collection, ex Eliasberg:442. MS-63+. Identifiable by superb coppery toning and a number of spots at the sixth star. Graded MS-63 by NGC in 1992.
2. The example graded MS-61 by PCGS. Unseen by me. There are two listings for MS-61's; I assume that this is the same coin which was submitted twice.
3. Dick Appel inventory (1991), ex Auction '89 (Rarcoa):416. PCGS graded AU-58. Identifiable by toning below the date.
4. Southern collection, AU-55. Prooflike with rich orange-gold color; clean and well struck. PCGS graded AU-55.
5. (tie). The three examples graded AU-50 by PCGS plus a few other coins in the AU-50 to AU-53 range.

# 1847-O



Mintage: 12,000

## General Information:

The 1847-O is the rarest New Orleans half eagle. It is also one of the rarest of all Liberty Head half eagles, despite the fact that very few people are aware of this.

Most 1847-O half eagles show a fairly good strike although the stars at the left obverse (as well as the hair around the face of Liberty) are typically weak. The reverse is always sharper than the obverse and even the center will show good detail. The mintmark, which is large and positioned above the VE in FIVE, is sometimes found slightly weak. The typical example is struck in dark greenish gold and is apt to either show heavy wear or numerous abrasions. Pieces with original mint lustre are so infrequently seen that it is impossible to accurately describe what the surface texture on high-grade pieces looks like.

No significant die varieties are known to exist. On a few coins the mintmark is not as sharply struck as on others.

Generally, this date appears for sale at auction at the rate of less than one example per year. When found, the 1847-O half eagle grades Very Good to Very Fine. Extremely Fine coins are very rare and About Uncirculated examples are excessively rare. No Mint State piece is known or rumored to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 25-30

Overall Rarity: Low R-6/Mid R-6

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
15-17	8-10	2-3	0
(High R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(R-8)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. H. C. Dodson Collection, Mid-American Rare Coin Auctions, May 1992. ex Melnick 2/84:3598. AU-55. Identifiable by a shallow mint-made planchet void at the final star. This coin sold for \$3,100 in 1984 and \$22,000 in 1992. Graded AU-58 and now in the Milas collection.
2. North Carolina collection, ex Winthrop Carner (1992). EF-45+. Graded EF-45 by PCGS.
3. Milas collection, ex Stack's 3/90:926, Hollinbeck 10/57:1216. EF-45. Graded EF-45 by NGC.
4. Southern collection. EF-45.
5. (tie). Norweb I:825; the Akers plate coin (ex Auction '79:305) and NERCA 3/78:899. All grade EF-40 or thereabouts.



# 1851-O



Mintage: 41,000

## General Information:

After a four-year hiatus, the New Orleans Mint resumed production of half eagles in 1851. After this issue production would be halted again, this time for three years.

The 1851-O half eagle is generally found with a poor strike. Most examples show weakness on the curls above the ear and on the corresponding reverse. It is not uncommon for examples to show significant weakness below the shield; in particular on the arrow feather and on the olive branch. Lustre is somewhat grainy with subdued frost most typical. The coloration is most often a rich green-gold hue. While lower grade pieces tend to come abraded, some of the finer known 1851-O half eagles are surprisingly clean.

As on the other 1851 issues of this denomination, the date is very large. The mintmark is large and centered over the VE in FIVE. Two varieties are known. The first, which is the more common, has a perfect date. The second shows moderate doubling on the peak of the first 1 in the date. While rarer than the perfect date variety, the repunched date carries no premium.

This issue is rare and very underrated in all grades. When available, the typical piece grades Fine to Very Fine. Extremely Fine pieces are very rare and full About Uncirculated 1851-O half eagles are extremely rare. Mint State examples are of the highest rarity.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
38-39	18-20	8-9	1-2
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Mid R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Milas Collection, ex Eliasberg;460. MS-60 or better. Weakly struck; various sources have graded this coin anywhere from AU-55 to MS-62. I graded the coin MS-61 when I last saw it, NGC graded it MS-62 in 1992.
2. Chicago collection, ex the author in 1988. PCGS graded AU-55. The sharpest struck example known to exist.
3. Mid American 8/91:715. Graded AU-55 by NGC. This coin was very lustrous but had a number of marks. It sold for \$5,720 to a New York dealer.
4. Dick Appel inventory (1991). Graded AU-53 by NGC.
5. (tie). A small number of AU-50 coins including three graded as such by PCGS as of April, 1992.

# 1854-O



Mintage: 46,000

## General Information:

The 1854-O half eagle is one of the more obtainable No Motto New Orleans half eagles. However, it is definitely not the “common” date which most pricing guides make it out to be.

The quality of strike for this issue varies greatly. While sometimes found very sharply impressed, most pieces show scattered areas of weakness. The curls around the face of Liberty are often weak as is, less frequently, the neck of the eagle. Sometimes, the tops of the 54 in the date and the mintmark are also weak. Some examples show clashed dies (most often at the left center on the reverse) and others come on poorly prepared planchets. The coloration ranges from a light green-gold to a lighter—and very pleasing—yellow gold. The lustre is usually very good with satiny, marginally reflective fields. Many of the higher grade 1854-O half eagles are heavily abraded.

The mintmark is large and round and positioned over the VE in FIVE. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

Very Fine and Extremely Fine 1854-O half eagles are not hard to locate. In About Uncirculated, this date becomes rare while fully Mint State pieces are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 115-125

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
57-62	39-41	15-17	4-5
(Low R-5/Mid R-5)	(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 6/80:670. MS-63. Sharply struck and frosty; struck from unclashed dies.
2. Milas Collection, probably ex Eliasberg:470. MS-60+. Average strike from clashed dies. Identifiable by a tiny cut on the base of the neck of Liberty.
3. Stack's 5/89:174. MS-60. Identifiable by marks between stars two and three.
4. Mid American 8/91:720. NGC graded AU-58. Extremely well struck. I graded the coin AU-55. It sold to a New York dealer for \$3,520.
5. (tie). A number of AU-55 coins including Superior 9/88:5424, New England 7/80:152 and the PCGS AU-55 which was offered in numerous 1989 Heritage FPL's and was later sold as Heritage 11/89:992, and Bowers and Merena 3/92:2048.

# 1855-O



Mintage: 11,100

## General Information:

This date is the first (and the rarest) of the popular low-mintage trio which closes out the production of No Motto New Orleans half eagles.

Most 1855-O half eagles are reasonably well struck. Some do show some weakness of strike on the curls around the face of Liberty. The typical coloration is a medium to deep green-gold hue. The lustre is usually satiny and somewhat frosty but it tends to be inferior to most of the other earlier issues from this mint.

The mintmark is fairly large and round and is positioned over the VE in FIVE. Two die varieties are known to exist. The first has a normal reverse. On the second, there is a tiny hollow area in the second vertical stripe in the shield; early die states of this variety show light recutting on the stars as well. This second variety appears to be very rare.

The 1855-O half eagle is quite rare in all grades. Most survivors grade Very Fine or so. Extremely Fine coins are very rare and About Uncirculated pieces are extremely rare. At the present time, this issue is unique in Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 45-50

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5/High R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
28-29	12-14	5-6	1
(Low R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(High R-7)	(Unique)

## Condition Census:

1. Milas collection. MS-60. Graded MS-60 by NGC in 1992. Pedigree unknown.
2. The example graded AU-58 by NGC. Handled by Dick Appel and sold to a client in 1989.
3. Miles:437, ex Wolfson (Stack's 10/62):452, Wilson-Reuter (Stack's 10/59):996. AU-55.
4. Paramount 11/74:530. AU-55. Prooflike. Identifiable by a tiny reverse rim nick at 1:30.
5. Norweb I (Bowers and Merena 10/87): 845. AU-50.

# 1856-O



Mintage: 10,000

## General Information:

The 1856-O has a mintage figure of only 10,000 coins. This ties it with the 1892-O for the lowest mintage figure of any New Orleans half eagle. In terms of overall rarity, the 1856-O is just a bit less rare than the 1855-O and is very similar to the 1857-O.

Nearly all examples of this date are well struck. Most show medium to deep green-gold color and have frosty lustre. A few of the high-grade pieces are prooflike and these are very rare. The 1856-O half eagle is almost always found with very heavy abrasions on its surfaces.

The size, shape, and placement of the mintmark on this issue is identical to that found on the 1855-O. Two die varieties are known. The first has a normal date while the second shows slight recutting on the peak of the 1 in the date. It is not known which of these two varieties is scarcer.

This is a scarce coin in all grades. Most known examples grade Very Fine. Choice Extremely Fine pieces are very rare while About Uncirculated coins are extremely rare. Only one Mint State 1856-O half eagle is currently known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
31-32	16-19	7-8	1
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Mid R-7)	(Unique)

## Condition Census:

1. Milas Collection, ex Ebsen:2553, New Netherlands. MS-60. Prooflike; identifiable by a scratch below F in OF to the back of the eagle's neck. Graded MS-61 by NGC in 1992.
2. Massachusetts collector, ex. the author (1992). PCGS AU-50. Semi-prooflike and very sharply struck; clean surfaces for the issue.
3. The example which was graded AU-50 by PCGS in June, 1992 and sold by a New York dealer for a reported \$7,000.
4. Bell 2 (Rarcoa 1963): 681. AU-50. Lightly worn but very heavily abraded. This coin probably reappeared as 1980 ANA:252.
5. Bowers and Merena 11/91:2359. AU-50. (Later graded AU-58 by NGC). Struck from a slightly misaligned obverse die and, as a result, somewhat weak on the date and stars one through three. This piece was purchased by a pair of New Jersey dealers.



# 1857-O



Mintage: 13,000

## General Information:

The 1857-O half eagle is nearly identical in rarity to the 1856-O. Until recently, it was the rarest of the 1855-1857 New Orleans half eagles in high grades, but a few nice examples have turned up in the past two or so years.

Most examples are well struck. The usual coloration is a medium green-gold with a few pieces showing lighter yellow gold color. The lustre is typically frosty although a few semi-prooflike pieces exist. Most 1857-O half eagles are heavily abraded. It is harder to find a visually pleasing 1857-O half eagle than any other New Orleans half eagle struck in the 1850s.

The mintmark is somewhat large and round. It is positioned over the left side of the E in FIVE. No die varieties are known.

Virtually all 1857-O half eagles grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine. Full About Uncirculated examples are extremely rare and no Mint State piece currently exists.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
36-38	18-20	6-7	0
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Mid R-7/High R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Eliasberg;485. AU-55. Bagmarked in the left obverse field. This may also be the coin which was graded AU-55 by PCGS.
2. H.C. Dodson Collection, Mid-American Rare Coin Auctions, May 1992. AU-53. Softly struck on the hair bun, stars ten and eleven and the corresponding reverse. Identifiable by a small crescent-shaped mark across the 7 in the date. This coin sold for \$9,625.
3. Harmer Rooke 3/91 to Tony Terranova. Later graded AU-50 by PCGS. In my opinion, this coin should have graded AU-53.
4. 1982 ANA (Steve Ivy Rare Coin Auctions):1061. AU-50. Identifiable by a coppery toning spot between stars six and seven.
5. (tie). A small number of EF-45 coins exist including at least two different examples graded as such by PCGS.

# 1892-O



Mintage: 10,000

## General Information:

After a 35 year hiatus, production of New Orleans half eagles resumed in 1892. Only 10,000 coins were struck, tying this issue with the 1856-O for the lowest mintage for any half eagle from this mint.

The 1892-O to 1894-O New Orleans half eagles constitute a different type from the 1840-1857 issues due to the placement of the motto IN GOD WE TRUST on the reverse.

The 1892-O half eagle is usually well struck. Most examples have rich, frosty lustre and are often semiprooflike. A few fully prooflike examples are known but these are quite rare. The coloration is often a deep orange-gold with deeper orange-gold shadings around the edges. This gives a sort of "halo" effect which many collectors find appealing. Almost all known examples are heavily bagmarked.

All known 1892-O half eagles have a medium-sized mintmark which is characterized by a very narrow opening. It is positioned above the V in FIVE. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

It appears that very few examples of this date were actually released into circulation. Most were shipped to Europe where they paid off trade imbalances and became part of bank's reserves.

This is a rare date in all grades. Most known 1892-O half eagles are found in at least Extremely Fine. The typical About Uncirculated piece is lustrous but heavily marked. Mint State specimens are very rare and invariably grade MS-60 or so.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
10-11	18-20	22-23	10-11
(Low R-7)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Mid R-6)	(Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Kramer (Stack's 12/88):469, ex Auction '87 (Paramount):432. MS-60+.
2. (tie). A small group of pieces graded MS-60 by PCGS including Heritage 11/89:995, Heritage 2/91:5505 and Bowers and Merena 3/91:611.
3. (tie). A small group of AU-58 to MS-60 pieces including Bowers and Merena 10/87:932 and Stack's 1/90:1068, ex Wolfson (Stack's 10/62):554.

# 1893-O



Mintage: 110,000

## General Information:

The 1893-O has the second highest mintage of any New Orleans half eagle. In terms of the total number known to exist, it is the third most common issue in this series.

The quality of strike for the 1893-O half eagle varies. While some examples are found well struck, most show weakness at their centers. The lustre on the typical 1893-O half eagle is very good and it tends to be frosty. The coloration is often a rich orange-gold with a ring of deeper color at the peripheries. Since many examples of this date were shipped loose in bags to Europe, the surfaces are nearly always very heavily abraded.

The mintmark is somewhat larger than on the 1892 and it is positioned over the left side of the V in FIVE. No significant die varieties are known. Late die states show an obverse crack which joins all of the stars; a number of fine cracks can also be seen through the reverse legends. On such coins, the centers are much weaker than on the perfect die coins.

This is an easy issue to locate in all circulated grades. "Sliders" abound and most pieces offered for sale as "Mint State" before the advent of PCGS and NGC only grade AU-55 to AU-58 by today's standards. In Uncirculated, this date is still fairly scarce. Most known examples grade MS-60 or a hair better. MS-63 coins are very rare and gems are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 200-225

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
25-30	80-90	70-75	25-30
(Low R-6)	(High R-4)	(Low R-5)	(Low R-6)

## Condition Census:

1. Superior 10/90:2115, ex Mid American 3/89:1614. MS-64. Also graded MS-64 by ANACS. It sold for \$8,910 in its last auction appearance.
2. Auction '89 (Akers):1398. MS-63. Late die state with slightly weak centers.
3. North Carolina collector, ex the author. Graded MS-63 by NGC but subsequently removed from the holder.
4. (tie). A small number of MS-60+ examples including at least four graded MS-61 by PCGS as of May, 1992.
5. (tie). A large number of MS-60 examples including many which are "slabbed" by the various services.

# 1894-O



Mintage: 16,600

## General Information:

Despite its low mintage, the 1894-O is one of the more common of all New Orleans half eagles, especially in higher grades.

Most pieces are well struck and show better detail on the hair and the feathers than on 1892-O and the 1893-O half eagles. The coloration on the typical 1894-O is frosty; some examples have semiprooflike fields. The coloration is most often a rich yellow gold with other pieces showing deeper green-gold and rose shades.

The mintmark is similar in shape to the 1893-O. At least two positional varieties are known. On the first, the mintmark is high and placed over the middle of the V in FIVE. On the second, the mintmark is lower and it is placed slightly to the right of the center of the VE in FIVE.

It appears that the majority of 1894-O half eagles saw minimal, if any, circulation. Most appear to have been shipped to Europe. In the past few years, a number of hoards have come back to the United States. Most of these are lustrous and free of real wear, but are heavily bagmarked and show "rub" on their high spots. In circulated grades, this is a very common coin. Mint State examples typically grade MS-60. This issue becomes very rare in MS-63 and I have never seen a gem.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 175-200

Overall Rarity: Low R-4

By Grade:

<b>VF</b>	<b>EF</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>Mint State</b>
25-30	70-75	65-75	15-20
(Low R-6)	(Low R-5)	(Low R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)

## Condition Census:

All of the Uncirculated examples of this date which I have ever seen or heard of are essentially impossible to distinguish between. All of these coins grade MS-60 or so. While I don't doubt that a few choice examples of this date exist, at present it is futile to construct a Condition Census for this issue.



# 1909-O Indian Head Type



(1908-1929)

Mintage: 34,200

## General Information:

Production of gold coins resumed at the New Orleans Mint in 1909. However, only half eagles were struck. No more gold coins would ever be struck at this mint, as it was permanently closed in 1909.

The 1909-O half eagle is typically found with a good quality of strike. Usually, the center of the obverse will not be fully defined, but the intricate feather details on the obverse and on the reverse are often full. On certain lower grade pieces, the mintmark is so faint that it can be easily missed by the naked eye. The lustre on this issue is frosty and slightly below average. The color most often seen on circulated examples is a fairly deep orange-gold or green-gold. High-grade examples (of which few exist) often have superb orange-gold, green, and rose color. The surfaces are often heavily abraded and many examples have been cleaned.

Two varieties are known. On one, the mintmark is weak and double punched to the left. On the second, the mintmark is much sharper and shows no signs of doubling.

This issue is rather common in circulated grades and decent quality. About Uncirculated specimens are not hard to locate. In Mint State, the 1909-O becomes very rare. While a few really superb coins exist (see the Condition Census below), most Uncirculated 1909-O half eagles grade no better than MS-60 to MS-62.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 300-350

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

**VF**  
80-90  
(High R-4)

**EF**  
110-120  
(R-4)

**AU**  
100-125  
(R-4)

**Mint State**  
10-15  
(High R-6/Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Texas collection, ex Auction '89 (Akers):1405, Auction '83 (Paramount):404, Eliasberg:623, Clapp, Mitchelson. Obtained from the mint in 1909. MS-65. Also graded MS-65 by PCGS.
2. Smithsonian Institute, ex Lilly Collection. MS-65. Nearly the same quality as #1 but more susceptible to mishandling.
3. Superior 8/91:739, ex Auction '90 (Akers):1803, Duckor, Kruthoffer, Auction '79 (Rarcoa):1279, Johnson and Meyer Collection (Bowers and Ruddy, 2/78):1315. MS-64. Also graded MS-64 by PCGS.
4. Dr. Thaine Price Collection. MS-64. Unseen by me but confirmed by David Akers.
5. (tie). A small group of pieces which grade MS-63.

## Rarity Summary: New Orleans Liberty Head Half Eagles

Date	VF	EF	AU	Mint State	Total	High Grade
1840-O	53-57	47-50	13-15	2-3	115-125	15-18
1842-O	23-24	8-10	3-5	1	35-40	4-6
1843-O*	78-94	33-40	12-13	2-3	125-150	14-16
1844-O	110-114	70-79	35-40	10-12	225-250	45-52
1845-O	52-55	32-37	13-14	3-4	100-110	16-18
1846-O	44-45	19-20	10-12	2-3	75-80	12-15
1847-O	15-17	8-10	2-3	0	25-30	2-3
1851-O	38-39	18-20	8-9	1-2	65-70	9-11
1854-O	57-62	39-41	15-17	4-5	115-125	19-22
1855-O	28-29	12-14	5-6	1	45-50	6-7
1856-O	31-32	16-19	7-8	1	55-60	8-9
1857-O	36-38	18-20	6-7	0	60-65	6-7
1892-O	10-11	18-20	22-23	10-11	60-65	32-34
1893-O	25-30	80-90	70-75	25-30	200-225	95-105
1894-O	25-30	70-75	65-75	15-20	175-200	80-95

\* This includes both types of 1843-O

NOTE: "High Grade" means coins grading About Uncirculated and higher

### Overall Rarity

1. 1847-O
2. 1842-O
3. 1855-O
4. 1856-O
5. 1857-O
- 5(tie) 1892-O
7. 1851-O
8. 1846-O
9. 1845-O
10. 1840-O
- 10(tie) 1854-O
12. 1843-O
13. 1894-O
14. 1893-O
15. 1844-O

### High Grade Rarity

1. 1847-O
2. 1842-O
3. 1855-O
- 3(tie) 1857-O
5. 1856-O
6. 1851-O
7. 1846-O
8. 1843-O
9. 1840-O
10. 1845-O
11. 1854-O
12. 1892-O
13. 1844-O
14. 1894-O
15. 1893-O



## Section FIVE

# Eagles

### I. Without Motto, 1838-1866

1841-O, 2,500	1851-O, 263,000
1842-O, 27,400	1852-O, 18,000
1843-O, 175,162	1853-O, 51,000
1844-O, 118,700	1854-O, 52,500
1845-O, 47,500	1855-O, 18,000
1846-O, 81,780	1856-O, 14,500
1847-O, 571,500	1857-O, 5,500
1848-O, 35,850	1858-O, 20,000
1849-O, 23,900	1859-O, 2,300
1850-O, 57,500	1860-O, 11,100

Total Mintage: 1,597,692

### II. With Motto, 1866-1907

1879-O, 1,500	1894-O, 107,500
1880-O: 9,200	1895-O, 98,000
1881-O: 24,015	1897-O, 42,500
1882-O: 10,820	1899-O, 37,047
1883-O: 800	1901-O, 72,041
1888-O: 21,335	1903-O, 112,771
1892-O: 28,688	1904-O, 108,950
1893-O: 17,000	1906-O, 86,895

Total Mintage: 779,062

Total Mintage Both Types: 2,376,754



# 1841-O



Mintage: 2,500

## General Information:

The 1841-O has the third lowest mintage of any eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint. It is one of the true rarities from this mint; especially in higher grades.

This issue usually comes with a fairly weak strike. The obverse invariably shows softness on the stars and on the curls near the face of Liberty. The reverse is even softer with the borders often quite faintly impressed. All of the examples of this date which I have seen have been prooflike although most were so well worn that little of the original surfaces remained intact. Original, uncleaned pieces show a lovely, deep green-gold coloration. The surfaces are always liberally abraded; typically with deep, detracting marks.

All known examples have a tall, oval mintmark. No significant die varieties are known to exist although late die states may show light clashmarks below the left wing of the eagle.

The vast majority of 1841-O eagles grade Very Fine or lower. This date is extremely rare in Extremely Fine and of the highest rarity in About Uncirculated. No Mint State specimens are known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 45-50

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5/High R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
34-37	9-10	2-3	0
(High R-5)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(R-8)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 10/89:1535, ex Stack's 10/86:934, Eliasberg:665, Clapp, Sears (1920). AU-50 to 55. Identifiable by its superb color and a small lamination over TE in STATES.
2. Stack's 3/82:1217, ex Kagin 9/78:2053. EF-45 to AU-50. Identifiable by a small mark below star five and a spot on the E in UNITED.
3. Private collection, ex Dr. Richard Appel in 1988. EF-45. A virtual 50 coin in terms of sharpness but just a touch too bagmarked to grade as such.
4. Texas collection. EF-45.
5. Stack's 9/81:13. EF-40+

# 1842-O



Mintage: 27,400

## General Information:

This is the most common of the three gold issues struck at the New Orleans Mint in 1842. But, it closely rivals the rarity of its quarter eagle and half eagle counterparts in high grades.

The quality of strike for the 1842-O eagle is much better than that found on the 1841-O. The obverse is usually quite sharp, as is the reverse. The only area which is prone to show weakness is the center of the obverse, especially the curls about the face of Liberty. The lustre for this issue is generally good with many of the higher grade survivors showing rich mint frost. The coloration ranges from orange-gold to a deep green-gold.

All 1842-O eagles have a large date. Two die varieties are known. The first, which is much scarcer, has the reverse of 1841. The second has a mintmark which is wider, rounder and closer to the arrow feather.

A very unusual 1842-O eagle was offered for sale as Lot 4276 in Superior's Bernard Shore sale in early 1988. This coin had an incredibly sharp strike and unusually deep, reflective surfaces. In addition, it had an uncommonly squared edge with milling which seemed higher and larger than on a "normal" strike. On the obverse, there were raised die lines at the second and third stars and the fourth star was widely recut. More die lines could be seen from below the final star to the date. Unfortunately, this piece had been so heavily cleaned it was difficult to determine if it was, as claimed, a presentation piece or specimen striking.

This issue is common in Very Fine and is not hard to find in Extremely Fine. It becomes rare in About Uncirculated and is extremely rare in full Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 105-115

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<b>VF</b>	<b>EF</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>Mint State</b>
73-78	22-24	8-11	2-4
(High R-4/Low R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(Low-Mid R-7)	(High R-7/R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '86 (Superior):1418. MS-60+. Identifiable by a mark over star 13.
2. Stack's 4/83:1280, ex Stack's 3/82:1183, Stack's 4/78:891. MS-60.
3. Stack's 10/89:1537. MS-60. Identifiable by a mark over star one.
4. Superior 1/88:4276. Sharpness of MS-60 or better but cleaned. Possibly ex Bowers and Ruddy 2/74:777.
5. Utah collector, ex the author (October,1991). AU-55; also graded AU-55 by PCCS. Fully lustrous and very sharp with some light scattered marks in the fields.



# 1843-O



Mintage: 175,162

## General Information:

Due to its comparably high mintage, the 1843-O eagle is regarded as a common issue. While this is true for lower grade pieces, this date is actually quite rare in higher grades.

Most 1843-O eagles are well struck. The stars show very full detail, including nearly full radial lines. The centers also tend to be sharp with even the curls near the face nearly fully defined. It appears that this issue was struck with a slightly broader border than the 1841-O and the 1842-O eagles and many pieces show partial wire rims on the obverse and on the reverse. The typical piece has average quality lustre which is most often semi-prooflike. The coloration ranges from a rich green-gold to a lighter yellow gold. The surfaces are usually heavily abraded.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

A small quantity of 1843-O eagles (along with 1848-O and 1851-O eagles) were included in a hoard which was unearthed on a Mississippi plantation in 1974. These coins had dirt in the lettering and had incurred some abrasions on the surfaces during their excavation. A second group of 1843-O eagles were part of the salvage from a sunken ship. These coins have Mint State sharpness but have mattelike surfaces from exposure to seawater.

While a fair number of "Uncirculated" 1843-O eagles were auctioned in the 1970s and the 1980s, very few of these qualify as such by today's grading standards. While common in lower grades, this date is quite rare in About Uncirculated and it is extremely rare in full Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 110-120

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
65-67	30-34	11-13	4-5
(Low R-5)	(High R-5/Low R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Pine Tree 5/76:406. MS-60+. The coin sold for \$3,500 in 1976.
2. Stack's 9/81:13, ex Stack's 12/79:892. MS-60. Weakly struck at the centers; identifiable by a spot over the T in STATES.
3. Pierce (Stack's 5/1965):1451. MS-60.
4. New England collection, ex Gozan, Dr. Green (Mehl, 1949):597. MS-60. Semi-prooflike. Identifiable by some marks in the left obverse field.
5. (tie). American Rare Coin Fund, L.P.; Bowers and Merena 1990 *"Cabinet of Rarities"* (Fixed Price List). Graded AU-58 by NGC. Rich coppery toning; identifiable by a mark behind the head of the eagle. It was listed for \$3,350 (and) the example listed in the November 1991 price list(s) of Delaware Valley Rare Coins. Graded AU-58 by PCGS. It is not certain if this is the same coin as the NGC AU-58.

# 1844-O



Mintage: 118,700

## General Information:

The 1844-O eagle is very similar in rarity to the 1842-O and the 1843-O eagles. In Mint State, the 1844-O is a rarer coin.

1844-O eagles are generally found with a good quality strike. Most pieces show weakness at the centers, particularly on the hair directly above the ear of Liberty. The borders are broad and sharp and partial wire rims are sometimes seen. The lustre on this issue is most often semi-prooflike although some frosty, non-reflective pieces exist. The coloration is most often a medium green-gold, but I have seen a number of pieces with deep, rich coppery toning. As with most of the New Orleans eagles from this era, the surfaces on most pieces are heavily abraded.

Varieties are known with a normal mintmark and a sharply repunched mintmark. The second variety is very rare. On late die states of the first variety, the reverse shatters and, eventually, a cud forms at the lower reverse.

A single Proof 1844-O eagle exists. It was formerly sold as Lot 1151 in the Parmelee Sale (New York Coin and Stamp, 1890) and was purchased, along with the Proof half eagle of this date, by William Woodin. For many years, it was rumored that the Proof 1844-O eagle was in the possession of a famous New York state collector, but this is unconfirmed and almost definitely not true. I know that a Texas dealer has searched for many years to locate this coin but has yet to find it. He remains hopeful, though, that it still exists.

A small hoard of "seawater" pieces exist. These have Mint State sharpness but their surfaces are mattelike due to exposure to saltwater. Such coins should be valued at the Extremely Fine level.

This date is common in Very Fine and not hard to locate in nice Extremely Fine. It becomes very rare in About Uncirculated and most

which qualify as such grade no better than AU-50. Original Mint State 1844-O eagles are exceedingly rare and I have never seen a piece which grades as such.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 120-130

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State*</u>
76-80	32-35	11-13	1-2
(R-4)	(High R-5)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(R-8)

\* This figure does not include the "seawater" coins described above.

## Condition Census:

1. Woodin Collection, ex Parmelee:1151. Proof. Currently untraced.
2. Alabama collection, ex the author, 1988. AU-55. Identifiable by a fine, long scratch in the left obverse field.
3. Stack's 1/86:198. AU-55. Prooflike. Somewhat abraded but lightly worn.
4. Texas collection, ex Pierce:1452. AU-50.
5. (tie). A small group of average quality AU-50 coins including two graded by PCGS and Eliasberg:672 (ex Clapp, Mougey).

# 1845-O



Mintage: 47,500

## General Information:

The 1845-O is similar in overall rarity to the 1842 to 1844 New Orleans eagles. This date is somewhat better known to non-specialists, though, due to the existence of a number of significant varieties.

The quality of strike for this issue is about average. The centers are often fairly sharp, although it is rare to locate a piece which isn't weak on the curls around the face of Liberty. The stars at the left are often weaker than those on the right. All genuine examples of this date have "floating" curls on the back of Liberty's neck. The lustre on most examples is frosty, but a number of semi-prooflike coins are known. The typical coloration is a medium green-gold; high-grade, uncleaned examples may possess a rich orange-gold color as well.

Three die varieties are known to exist. They are described as follows:

1. Normal Date. Supposedly the most common of the three, but I have actually seen fewer of these than of #2.

2. Repunched 84. These two digits show minor doubling at their bases. This variety has two mintmark positions: above EN in TEN and over the N in TEN. This is the most common variety.

3. Doubled Date. This is actually a "Large Date over Small Date" variety, as it appears that the initial logotype was much too small and was then corrected. The discovery coin was probably Lot 241 in New Netherlands' June, 1957 sale. Interestingly, on this variety the first stripe in the second pair of stripes on the shield is always broken away at the top. This variety is rare, although not as much so as previously stated.

The so-called "1845/44-O" described in Pierce:1454 is in fact the variety described as #3.

The 1845-O eagle is easy to locate in Very Fine but nice Extremely Fine pieces are hard to find. About Uncirculated examples are very rare and this date is extremely rare in full Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known:100-110

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
63-68	27-29	8-10	2-3
(Low R-5)	(Low R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Bass Collection, ex Eliasberg:674, Clapp, Ten Eyck (Mehl, 1922), Cleanay (Chapman Brothers, 1890). MS-63. Identifiable by a small mint-made rough area near the base of the coronet point. Variety #3.
2. Auction '88 (Superior):409, ex Superior 1/86:3203, Auction '83 (Superior):1902, Stack's 9/81:22. MS-60. Variety #3.
3. Texas collection, ex Miles:626. AU-58. The reverse is fully Mint State. Variety unknown.
4. Superior 1/90:4779, ex Stack's 5/89:207. AU-55. Really a Mint State coin but cleaned. Variety #3.
5. Superior 1/80:805. AU-55. Variety #2; mintmark over N in TEN.

# 1846-O



Mintage: 81,780

## General Information:

The 1846-O is scarcer than the 1842 to 1845 New Orleans eagles. It is a very interesting issue, as well, as it contains a number of significant die varieties including the only verifiable overdate on a gold coin struck at this mint.

This issue is not as well struck as some of the earlier New Orleans eagles. Most pieces are weak on the curls around the face of Liberty and on the eagle's right leg. Other coins show weakness on the arrow feathers and on the shield. The lustre on the typical 1846-O eagle is prooflike. The coloration is most often a deep green-gold; some uncleaned, higher grade examples have rich orange-gold overtones. As on the 1845-O eagle, the curls on the back of Liberty's neck are detached and appear to "float." Most known 1846-O eagles are very heavily abraded.

At least four important die varieties are known to exist. They are as follows:

1. Normal Date and Stars. The mintmark is positioned over the EN in TEN; it may be repunched on early die state pieces. This is the most common variety.

2. Normal Date, Thin Stars. The sixth through the ninth stars are very thin; this is, most probably, due to a lapped die. The mintmark is positioned far to the right over the space between the N in TEN and the D. in the denomination. This variety is very rare.

3. First Overdate, 1846/5-O. The knob of the 5 can be clearly seen in the loop of the 6. The mintmark is positioned over EN in TEN. This is the more common of the two overdates and it is the second most available variety of the year.

4. Second Overdate, 1846/5-O. The curve of a 5 can be seen within the loop of the 6 and part of the 5 can be seen, as well, to the right of

the 6. The mintmark is far to the right, as on variety #2. This is a very rare coin.

The 1846/6-O claimed by Breen does not appear to exist.

In my opinion, the Overdate varieties (especially #3, above) should command a premium of 20% to 25% over the common "normal" date variety.

A small group of seawater 1846/5-O eagles exist. All are variety #3 and show nearly Mint State sharpness.

This issue is reasonably common in Very Fine but it is scarce in Extremely Fine and is very rare in About Uncirculated. Full Mint State pieces are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
44-45	17-19	6-7	3-4
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Mid R-7/High R-7)	(High R-7/R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Eliasberg:676, ex Ten Eyck (Mehl, 5/1922), Cleanay (Chapman Brothers, 12/1890). MS-65. Prooflike. An incredible coin! This piece sold for \$30,800 in 1982 and would easily bring a six-figure price today. Variety #3.
2. Eliasberg:677, ex Clapp, Mumford (New York Coin and Stamp, 4/1896). MS-60+. Prooflike. Variety #2. Easily the finest known of this rare variety.
3. Private collection, ex Atwater:1520. Unseen by me but verified by a reliable source. Variety #1.
4. Stack's 1/86:203, ex 1976 ANA (Stack's):3046. AU-55 or better. Free of real wear but bagmarked and rubbed in the fields. Variety #3.
5. Michigan collector, ex the author in 1989. AU-55. Prooflike and deeply toned. Variety #1.



# 1847-O



Mintage: 571,500

## General Information:

The 1847-O eagle has the highest mintage of any gold coin ever struck at the New Orleans Mint. It is the second most common No Motto New Orleans eagle and is really just about the only issue of this type which is obtainable in higher grades.

The quality of strike for the 1847-O eagle is reasonably sharp, although most examples show weakness on the curls around Liberty's face and above her ear. On the reverse, the eagle's right leg and left wing tip are sometimes softly impressed. There are two distinct "looks" found on 1847-O eagles. Certain pieces are fully prooflike and struck in rich green-gold. Others are very frosty and have a lighter color which may be accentuated by orange-gold toning. Most pieces show noticeable abrasions on the surfaces.

Two die varieties are known. The first has a normal date. On early die states, there are raised vertical die file marks near the first star and to the left of the date. The second variety has a recut 18 in the date. Late die states of this variety show numerous fine die cracks on the obverse and the reverse with these being heaviest at stars five through nine. This second variety is a bit more scarce than the first.

Since most Uncirculated 1847-O eagles have a similar look (very frosty with rich orange-gold color), it seems probable that a small hoard existed at one time.

This date is very common in Very Fine and Extremely Fine grades. Nice About Uncirculated pieces are somewhat scarce and are always in demand as type coins. Mint State 1847-O eagles are reasonably available (at least in comparison to most other No Motto eagles) but are still quite rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 250-300

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
122-172	95-100	21-23	12-15
(R-4)	(R-4)	(Mid R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. 1991 ANA (Bowers and Merena):1923, ex Heritage 2/90:5520, Auction '86 (Superior):1419, Auction '84 (Paramount):943, Auction '80 (Superior):422. MS-63 or so; graded MS-63 by PCGS. Identifiable by a small spot in the left obverse field near the second star.
2. Auction '84 (Paramount):944, ex Auction '79 (Stack's):891. MS-63 or so; possibly later graded MS-63 by PCGS. Identifiable by a spot below TE in STATES. A virtual twin to coin #1.
3. Superior 1/90:4782, ex Superior 10/89:4669, Bowers and Merena 6/89:1600, Norweb II (Bowers and Merena 3/88):2157. MS-62. Graded MS-63 by NGC. Prooflike; raised vertical die file marks on the obverse. This coin has been auctioned at a number of different grade levels including AU-55(!) and MS-64.
4. Stack's 9/81:26, ex Stack's 3/81:1224. MS-62. Similar in appearance to coins #1 and #2 but with a few more scuffmarks in the fields.
5. (tie). A group of two or three pieces which grade MS-60+ or better. This includes a PCGS MS-62 which was owned by Numismatic Emporium at the 1991 ANA convention and which was later sold to a Georgia dealer.

# 1848-O



Mintage: 35,850

## General Information:

The 1848-O Eagle is a hard coin to locate in all grades. In About Uncirculated and higher it is unappreciated and extremely rare.

This may be the most poorly struck New Orleans eagle produced during the 1840s. The stars are always very flat and never show any detail on the radial lines. The centers are often very blurry with the portrait especially so. The curls around the face of Liberty are always weak, as is the hair below the ear. In addition, the E in LIBERTY is sometimes nearly illegible. The reverse is also weakly struck, but not as much so as the obverse. Both sides often show partial wire rims. The lustre on the typical example is semi-prooflike, although some frosty pieces are known. Most 1848-O eagles have light to medium green-gold coloration.

All pieces have a closed 4 in the date. Late strikings show a sunken die. The obverse appears slightly concave and there is pronounced weakness on the hair below LIBERTY.

Two die varieties are known. The first has a normal shield. On the second there is a hollow ring on the shield. This ring is not the same as found on the 1851 to 1853 New Orleans eagles. On the 1848-O, this punchmark is located on the third and fourth lines in the azure portion of the shield; on the later issues this punchmark is on the second stripe in the pale gules (i.e., the vertical stripes). Curiously, every sunken die 1848-O eagle I have seen has the reverse ring.

This is a scarce coin in all grades and most known examples grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine. About Uncirculated and Mint State 1848-O eagles are excessively rare. Both PCGS and NGC tend to undergrade examples of this date as they mistake the weakness of strike described above for wear.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 85-95

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
54-61	22-23	7-8	2-3
(Mid R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(Mid R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Bowers and Merena 11/89:1176. MS-60+. Also graded MS-61 by PCGS. The Akers plate coin.
2. Texas Collection, ex Pierce (Stack's 5/65):1459. MS-60 or so. Typical strike.
3. Utah collection. AU-55+. Very nearly a Mint State coin but quite weakly struck on the obverse.
4. Paramount 2/75:617. AU-55. Part of the Mississippi Plantation hoard which was uncovered in 1974.
5. Eliasberg:681, ex Clapp, Earle (Henry Chapman, 6/1912). AU-50+.

# 1849-O



Mintage: 23,900

## General Information:

The 1849-O is the second rarest New Orleans eagle to be struck during the 1840s. It is, in my opinion, the single most underrated eagle from this mint and it is among the most difficult dates of this entire type to locate in higher grades.

This issue is always found poorly struck, although not as much so as the 1848-O eagle. Most 1849-O eagles are very flat on the stars, but the hair and feather detail is reasonably bold. The lustre on most pieces is semi-prooflike but it should be pointed out that very few examples are known which show more than a suggestion of their original mint lustre. The coloration most often seen is a deep green-gold. Most 1849-O eagles are heavily abraded and locating a problem-free, uncleaned piece is very difficult.

Examples exist with a normal reverse and with a punchmark (or hollow ring) on the second stripe in the pale gules of the shield. This is similar to the mark found on the reverse of 1851-O, 1852-O and 1853-O eagles. The normal reverse coins are scarcer.

When available, the 1849-O eagle is typically well worn. Pleasing Extremely Fine coins are very rare while About Uncirculated specimens are extremely rare. Mint State coins are of the highest rarity.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
37-38	13-14	4-6	1-2
(High R-5)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(High R-7/R-8)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Utah collection, ex 1986 ANA (Kagin's):2563. MS-60+. Once lacquered, but subsequently dipped and now fully lustrous. Identifiable by a mark near Liberty's nose. Very well struck for the issue.
2. Kagin's 10/82:656. MS-60 or so. The obverse was a bit abraded while the reverse was nearly choice. NOT the same coin as #1.
3. Akers/Rarcoa Chicago Sale, 8/91:1043, ex Eliasberg:1043, Clapp, Sears (11/1920). AU-50. Identifiable by a spot opposite star twelve.
4. The example graded EF-45 by PCGS. When I viewed this coin, I thought it was a virtual AU-50.
5. (tie). Massachusetts collector, ex the author (1992); Stacks 2/79:659 and Mid American Rare Coin Auction, 5/92:321. All grade EF-45; the first was graded EF-40 by PCGS.

# 1850-O



Mintage: 57,500

## General Information:

The 1850-O eagle is not as rare as the 1848-O and the 1849-O but it is still a very elusive issue.

The strike on most examples of this issue is fairly sharp. The stars are mostly flat while the centers are apt to show a good amount of detail. The lustre on many 1850-O eagles is very good and most of the high-grade pieces which are known are very frosty; a few semi-prooflike coins are known as well. The coloration tends to be a bit lighter than on previous issues from this mint and it ranges from bright orange-gold to a deeper green-gold hue. Most 1850-O eagles are heavily abraded in the fields.

All known pieces have a large date with a closed 5. Interestingly, this appears to be the only New Orleans eagle struck from 1848 until 1853 on which at least some of the coins do not show the hollow ring on the shield lines.

This coin is typically found in Very Fine condition. Extremely Fine 1850-O eagles are scarce and About Uncirculated examples are very rare. Only one strictly Uncirculated 1850-O eagle is currently known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 80-85

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
50-51	20-22	9-11	1
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(Unique)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '86 (Superior):1421, ex Eliasberg:686, Clapp, Earle (Henry Chapman, 6/1912). MS-64+. Later graded MS-64 by NGC. Sharply struck; frosty with superb color. A magnificent coin. Later handled by a Texas dealer and sold for over \$100,000 in 1990.
2. The example graded AU-55 by PCGS. Unseen by the author.
3. Louisiana collection, ex Stack's 6/66:987. AU-55.
4. New York dealer, 3/91 Coin World ad. AU-50+. Graded AU-50 by PCGS.
5. (tie). A small number of AU-50 pieces.



# 1851-O



Mintage: 263,000

## General Information:

The 1851-O is the most common No Motto New Orleans eagle. It is, in fact, one of the most common dates of this entire type in lower grades and examples are still being found in groups of gold coins in Europe.

The typical 1851-O eagle shows an average quality strike. The stars are invariably flat and seldom show any detail on their radial lines. The centers often show weakness, especially on the curls around Liberty's face on the right leg of the eagle. The lustre on many pieces is semi-prooflike but a good number of frosty coins are known as well. The coloration most often seen is a deep green-gold hue. Most lower grade 1851-O eagles are heavily bagmarked and even lightly worn coins are rarely free of deep, detracting marks.

Two die varieties exist. The first has a normal reverse. The second has an unusual hollow ring at the top of the second vertical stripe in the shield. This ring is felt to be a center punch and it can clearly be seen even on lower grade coins. The first variety may not even exist; I have never seen an 1851-O eagle which did not have the ring on the reverse, but Walter Breen states that normal reverse pieces do exist.

This is a very common date in lower grades. It becomes scarce only in About Uncirculated, but pieces which grade AU-55 are quite rare and fully Uncirculated 1851-O eagles are actually extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 300-350

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
159-191	120-135	18-20	3-4
(R-4)	(R-4)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(High R-7/R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Bass Collection, ex Eliasberg:688, Clapp, Sears (1920). MS-64+. A superb coin with beautiful color and surfaces.
2. Texas Collection, ex Pierce:1465. MS-63+ or better. Before the reappearance of the Eliasberg coins, this was believed to be the finest known No Motto New Orleans eagle of any date.
3. 1988 ANA (Heritage):2255. MS-60. Discovered in Europe.
4. Pine Tree 2/75:595. MS-60. Possibly ex Cleanay (Chapman Brothers, 12/1890):505.
5. Mid-American Rare Coin Auctions 5/96:326. AU-58 or slightly better. Identifiable by a spot near stars eleven-twelve and a reverse spot over TE in STATES. The coin sold for \$9,350.

# 1852-O



Mintage: 18,000

## General Information:

After the huge mintage of 1851, production of eagles at the New Orleans mint dropped dramatically in 1852. As one might expect, this date is quite rare. Surprisingly, few people realize just how hard it is to locate an 1852-O eagle in high grade.

Most pieces are fairly well struck. As on most New Orleans eagles produced in the 1850s, this issue is typically found with flat stars. The curls around the face of Liberty are seldom found with full detail but the reverse is actually rather sharp with the exception of the uppermost portion of the eagle's right leg. On high-grade examples, the lustre is very good with some frost, and some prooflike coins are known. The coloration is mostly light green-gold and choice, original 1852-O eagles often have rich orange-gold toning.

It has generally been assumed that two varieties exist: one with a normal shield and one with the hollow ring on the reverse as on 1851. I have never seen an 1852-O eagle which did not have the ring on the reverse and I'm not certain that the normal reverse exists.

Most 1852-O eagles grade Very Fine or lower. This date is rare in full Extremely Fine and it is extremely rare in About Uncirculated. No Mint State coins are known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
45-47	13-15	7-8	0
(Mid R-5/High R-5)	(High R-6)	(Mid R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 3/90:1171. AU-50. Identifiable by a lamination through the 2 in the date into the field and another on the shield.
2. Superior 10/89:4695. AU-50. Possibly later graded AU-50 by PCGS. Identifiable by a large mark near star three.
3. Eliasberg:690, ex Clapp, Ten Eyck (Mehl, 5/1922). AU-50. Identifiable by a toning spot over the R in AMERICA.
4. Heritage 3/2/91:5473. AU-50. Graded AU-53 by NGC. Deep prooflike; identifiable by deep marks near stars four and 11.
5. (tie). A small number of EF-45 coins including Mid American Rare Coin Auctions 5/92:329; Utah collection, Texas collection and Mid American Rare Coin Auctions 5/85:1553.

# 1853-O



Mintage: 51,000

## General Information:

The 1853-O is the third most available No Motto New Orleans eagle. It is much scarcer than the 1847-O and the 1851-O and it is actually a very rare issue in higher grades.

The quality of strike for the 1853-O eagle is similar to that found on the 1852-O. The 1853-O is characteristically weak on the stars and the curls near the ear of Liberty. The lustre on the typical example is of average quality. A few very impressive, fully prooflike specimens are known. The usual coloration is a rich green-gold.

As with the 1851-O and the 1852-O, varieties are said to exist with a normal reverse and with a hollow ring on the shield. The normal reverse coins are rare but they do exist, unlike the 1851-O and the 1852-O which may not exist with such a reverse. Breen claims that a variety exists with the entire date double punched but I have never seen such a coin. On the common "hollow ring" coins, early die states show light repunching on the bases of the 53 in the date. The latest die state coins show cracks at the final star.

In Rarcoa's session of Auction '79, an extraordinary 1853-O appeared and it was catalogued as a "Branch Mint Proof." While this coin possesses uncommonly broad rims and extremely reflective surfaces, it is the opinion of many gold coin experts (myself included) that the aforementioned piece—while obviously "special"—does not qualify as a Proof.

This is a common coin in Very Fine, and Extremely Fine pieces are not hard to locate. About Uncirculated 1853-O eagles are rare although they exist in greater quantity than most No Motto New Orleans eagles. In Mint State, this date is extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 140-150

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
79-84	41-44	17-18	3-4
(High R-4)	(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(High R-7/R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '79 (Rarcoa):1303, ex Merkin 3/69:421. MS-63. Deep prooflike; previously cataloged as a "Branch Mint Proof."
2. Texas Collection, ex Abe Kosoff via private treaty. MS-60+.
3. 1976 ANA (Stack's):3171. MS-60. Prooflike; liberally abraded but free of wear. The coin sold for \$3,400.
4. Stack's 3/91:1319. AU-58 to MS-60. Graded AU-55 by PCGS. Identifiable by a tiny reverse rim nick at 2:00. Very conservatively graded by PCGS.
5. Eliasberg:692. AU-55. Identifiable by a small mark below the hair bun.

# 1854-O



Small Date



Large Date

Mintage (all kinds): 52,500

## General Information:

Taken as a date, the 1854-O eagle is similar to the 1853-O in terms of overall and in-grade rarity up through and including Extremely Fine coins. However, this issue contains two distinct varieties.

The more common of the two varieties is the so-called Small Date. (In fact, the date on this variety is rather large while the Large Date variety has a date size which should be called "huge"). This variety was struck before the Large Date.

The 1854-O Small Date often is weakly struck at the centers and on the stars. The area around the ear of Liberty typically is poorly defined. The lustre on this variety is satiny and somewhat frosty. The coloration is most often a medium orange-gold. Most pieces are heavily bagmarked.

The 1854-O Large Date is the rarer of the two varieties. It employs a logotype which was intended for a silver dollar. The first auction appearance of this variety of which I am aware is Mehl's 1946 Atwater sale. This issue is always softly struck. The curl below the ear of Liberty is sometimes so soft that it is hard to see. The stars are very flat and the obverse has a somewhat "sunken" appearance. However, a few very

sharply struck coins exist; these are quite scarce. Late die states show a number of cracks on the reverse which join the letters together. Current pricing guides give the 1854-O Large Date a huge premium over the Small Date. In fact, the Large Date is not much harder to find and its premium should be no more than 10-20%.

At one time, the 1854-O Large Date was a very rare coin. It is still scarce today, but nowhere near as much so as many catalogers still claim. Most of the known examples are well worn and any piece which grades EF-40 is desirable. This variety is extremely rare in About Uncirculated and is currently unknown in Mint State. The Small Date variety is invariably seen in lower grades and it is a tough issue to find in EF-45. About Uncirculated pieces are extremely rare and I know of only one Mint State example.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 125-135

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
80-85	32-35	12-13	1-2
(High R-4)	(High R-5)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Mid American Rare Coin Auctions 5/92:336; ex. Milas. Stack's 10/89:1544. AU-55. Small Date. Identifiable by two spots on the reverse. Purchased in the 1992 sale by a New Jersey investor/dealer.
2. Auction '90 (Superior):1347, ex Kramer (Stack's 12/88):571. NGC AU-58; I grade this coin AU-55 or so. Large Date. Minimal wear but bagmarked. Now owned by a New Jersey dealer.
3. Private collector, ex Dr. Richard Appel. AU-55. Small Date. Possibly from the Coin Galleries 8/84 sale.
4. Mid American 8/91:749. PCGS AU-50; I grade this coin AU-53. Large Date. Identifiable by a small scratch before the first A in AMERICA. The coin sold for \$6,270.
5. (tie). A small number of AU-50 coins, including two or three graded as such by PCGS and another piece graded AU-50 by NGC.



# 1855-O



Mintage: 18,000

## General Information:

As with the similarly dated half eagle, the 1855-O eagle is an issue whose true rarity is appreciated only by rare-date gold experts and New Orleans gold coin specialists.

The 1855-O eagle is generally found with a fairly weak overall strike. The centers are typically soft. The stars are a bit sharper than on some of the previous New Orleans eagles with the final few stars (most often the final three of four) very flat. The lustre is most often semi-prooflike and the typical coloration is a light greenish-gold hue. Most known 1855-O eagles are extensively abraded and very few have any degree of "eye appeal."

Two die varieties exist. The first—which is the more common—has a normal date. The second has a repunched date with all four digits doubled to the right.

This date is most often found in Very Fine. Nice Extremely Fine coins are rare and About Uncirculated pieces are extremely rare. No fully Mint State 1855-O eagle is currently known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
39-41	22-24	9-10	0
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 1/86:223, ex Scanlon:2475, Miles:647. AU-55+. Prooflike; light rubbing in the fields.
2. Norweb II (Bowers and Merena 3/1988):2171. AU-55. Identifiable by a few small marks past the final star.
3. Akers/Rarcoa Chicago Sale, 8/91:1043, ex Eliasberg:697, Clapp, Ten Eyck (Mehl, 5/1922). AU-50. In the Ten Eyck Sale, this coin was cataloged as "Fine!"
4. (tie). Auction '84 (Paramount):946, ex Stack's 9/81:43. EF-45+ to AU-50. Deep prooflike; identifiable by a deep abrasion past the second star and marks in the left obverse field and the example graded AU-50 by PCGS and sold by Dick Appel to a client late in 1991.
5. (tie). Superior 1/90:4795 and Bowers and Merena 1/91:230. Both grade EF-45; the former was later graded AU-50 by PCGS.

# 1856-O



Mintage: 14,500

## General Information:

The 1856-O eagle is very similar to the 1855-O eagle in terms of its overall rarity and the by-grade distribution of those pieces which are currently known to exist. But, it is a bit rarer in About Uncirculated and Mint State grades.

1856-O eagles are usually similar in to 1855-O eagle in terms of strike. But, the stars on the 1856-O tend to be somewhat flatter and most known specimens are weak on the hair over the ear of Liberty and the curls above her eye. The reverse is always sharper than the obverse and because of this, the reverse is a good guide to the true grade of the coin. The lustre on many pieces is below average and it is nearly always semi-prooflike. The coloration most often seen is a light green-gold with some uncleaned, high-grade pieces displaying a rich orange-gold overtone.

All 1856-O eagles have an upright 5. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

Nearly all of the surviving examples of this date grade Very Fine or lower. Extremely Fine pieces are rare and About Uncirculated specimens are extremely rare. No Mint State 1856-O eagle exists.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
40-41	18-21	7-8	0
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Mid R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 9/81:46. AU-55. Identifiable by a few small marks below stars five and six.
2. Eliasberg:700. AU-55. Identifiable by some toning behind the bun of Liberty.
3. Stack's 1/86:226, ex Scanlon:2476. AU-50+. Identifiable by deep coppery toning and a spot in back of the lower part of the hair bun.
4. Stack's 10/85:769. AU-50.
5. (tie). A small number of EF-45+ to AU-50 coins including Stack's 3/82:1240 and an example in a North Carolina collection which was once owned by Dick Appel.

# 1857-O



Mintage: 5,500

## General Information:

Due to its very low mintage figure, the 1857-O is one of the better known New Orleans eagles. While it is a rare coin, it is actually somewhat overrated in comparison to the 1855-O and the 1856-O.

The 1857-O eagle is typically found with a good quality strike for a New Orleans gold coin of this era. The first, second, and final stars are usually flat while the rest of the stars are more complete. The centers are frequently very sharp with no significant weakness. The lustre tends to be of average quality with most examples having semi-prooflike surfaces. The coloration is different than that seen on earlier New Orleans eagles and it ranges from a medium green-gold to a rich coppery russet.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

Until recently, this issue was thought to be very rare in lower grades. In the past few years, a reasonably large number of Very Fine and Extremely Fine coins have come onto the market. But, this issue is still extremely rare in About Uncirculated and it appears to be unknown in full Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
46-48	24-26	5-6	0
(Mid R-5)	(Low R-6/Mid R-6)	(High R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 10/80:626, ex Auction '79 (Stack's):895. AU-50+. Semi-prooflike with coppery-rose toning. Very clean surfaces for the date.
2. California collection, ex the author via private treaty in 1989. AU-50+. Identifiable by a small mark on the eagle's beak.
3. Stack's 10/84:1182. AU-50. Identifiable by a planchet flaw at the 85 in the date.
4. (tie). A group of three to five nice EF-45 pieces including Superior 10/89:4727, ex Miles:653 (PCGS graded EF-45); Rarcoa 1/73:243, ex Bell II (Rarcoa 4/63) and three other coins graded EF-45 by PCGS as of April, 1992.

# 1858-O



Mintage: 20,000

## General Information:

Due to the discovery of a hoard in 1985 (see below), the 1858-O eagle is the most common No Motto New Orleans eagle in higher grades.

The quality of strike found on this issue is usually good. The stars are invariably flat but the centers are boldly detailed. Sometimes, the date is weak, especially the bases of the 85. The lustre on the typical example is frosty and slightly prooflike. The coloration is most typically a medium green-gold. Many high-grade examples show either orange-gold or coppery overtones. The surfaces are usually heavily abraded, particularly on pieces which came from the hoard.

In 1985, a large number of 19th-century United States gold coins were found in Jackson, Tennessee. Most of the coin from this hoard appear to date from the 1850s and a number of high quality southern pieces were included. An unknown number of 1858-O eagles were present as well. I have never seen a specific inventory of the Jackson hoard (it probably does not exist), but I would guess that between 15 and 30 1858-O eagles were uncovered. Many graded About Uncirculated or Uncirculated. The majority of the Mint State coins were of very "average" quality (i.e., MS-60 to MS-61) and these can be readily identified by their rich orange-gold color and the presence of abrasions which were incurred when the coins were excavated and then carelessly handled by non-collectors. Two or three extremely choice 1858-O eagles were located and were then quietly placed in tightly held collections.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This is a common issue in Very Fine and Extremely Fine. About Uncirculated pieces are rare but exist in greater quantity than any other No Motto New Orleans eagle. Mint State 1860-O eagles are very

rare and most of the Jackson, Tennessee hoard coins described above have been absorbed by collectors and are off the market.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 115-125

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
49-53	33-35	26-28	7-9
(Mid R-5)	(High R-5)	(Low R-6)	(Mid R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. The example which, according to David Akers, traded hands at the 1972 CSNS show. Akers states that this coin was a "Gem" and that it might have once been in the Cleanay collection.
2. Private collection, ex Jackson, Tennessee hoard. MS-63 or better.
3. Private collection, ex Jackson, Tennessee hoard. MS-63.
4. (tie). A pair of MS-60+ coins, both from the same source as coins #2 and 3.
5. (tie). A small group of MS-60 coins including Auction '88 (Superior):414; Superior 1/86:3027, ex Eliasberg:706, Clapp, Sears (1920); Auction '88 (Akers):937, ex Stack's 10/86:957 and Superior 10/89:4728 and the PCGS MS-60 coin which was purchased by a New York dealer in 1992.



# 1859-O



Mintage: 2,300

## General Information:

The 1859-O is the rarest New Orleans eagle. It is a rarer coin than the famous 1858 eagle and examples are generally only offered for sale at significant auctions; and generally at the rate of fewer than one per year.

The quality of strike for this issue is below average. The stars are always flat and weakness is often seen on the obverse rim from 5:00 to 8:00. The curls around the face and the ear of Liberty are nearly always weak as are the right leg and wing of the eagle. Some higher grade pieces are semi-prooflike. The typical coloration is a dark green-gold hue. Just about every example I have ever seen was heavily abraded and many coins show rim nicks and/or bumps as well.

While I have never seen nor heard of a counterfeit 1859-O eagle, it is certainly possible that someone has tried to add a mintmark to a Philadelphia eagle dated 1859. The 1859-O eagle, however, has a different reverse. The New Orleans eagles have the old style (Type I) reverse which has thick, closed claws on the eagle. The 1859 eagles struck at Philadelphia use the new Type II reverse which has thinner, more open claws.

The rarity of this date has been exaggerated in the past. As an example, Breen's claim that "fewer than 12 survive" is incorrect. Still, the date is rarely seen in any grade. Most survivors grade Very Fine or lower. Extremely Fine 1859-O eagles are extremely rare and About Uncirculated examples are of the highest rarity. No Mint State 1859-O eagle is known.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 30-35

Overall Rarity: High R-5/Low R-6

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
17-19	12-14	1-2	0
(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(R-8)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Utah collection; possibly ex Stack's 10/84:1188. EF-45+ to AU-50. Identifiable by a scrape between stars nine and ten.
2. Eliasberg:709, ex Clapp, Mitchelson. EF-45. Identifiable by a mark on Liberty's throat and a spot near star twelve. Later graded EF-40 by PCGS. Now in an Indiana collection.
3. Norweb II (Bowers and Merena 3/1988):2181, ex New Netherlands 6/57:270. EF-45. Identifiable by a deep mark below OF. Later graded AU-50 by PCGS.
4. Stack's 9/81:55. EF-45 or so. The coin sold for a then-strong \$4,200.
5. (tie). A small group of EF-40 coins including Bowers and Merena 3/89:5595; Kramer (Stack's 12/88):586 and Stack's 3/90:1191 and an example graded EF-45 by ANACS and owned by an Indiana collector.

# 1860-O



Mintage: 11,100

## General Information:

The 1860-O is the final No Motto eagle to be struck at the New Orleans Mint. Production of eagles at this mint would not resume until its reopening in 1879.

The quality of strike found on this issue is much sharper than on the 1857 to 1859 New Orleans eagles. The stars are usually sharp, although many pieces may show a few stars with some flatness. Most examples have strong detail at their centers. The lustre on the average 1860-O eagle is excellent and is most often semi-prooflike to fully prooflike. The coloration can range from bright yellow gold to a deeper green-gold hue. Choice, uncleaned examples may show rich orange-gold or coppery toning.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This is a scarce date in all grades and it is most often found in Very Fine or Extremely Fine. In the past five to six years there have been a few pleasing About Uncirculated pieces which have come onto the market. It is possible that a small number of coins may have been included in the Jackson, Tennessee hoard. In Mint State this is still a very rare issue.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
37-38	22-23	12-13	4-6
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '84 (Superior), ex "Los Angeles Estate." MS-63. Prooflike, deep gold color. Identifiable by a toning spot past the first star. The coin sold for \$8,800.
2. (tie). The two "very choice Uncirculated" examples described by Akers, including the piece plated in his book on eagles. MS-63 or so.
4. Kreisberg 11/76:1324. MS-60+. Identifiable by marks below ES in STATES and a mark below the E in AMERICA.
5. Stack's 10/89:1553. MS-60. Superb deep golden coloration.

## Rarity Summary: New Orleans Eagles (With Motto)

Date	VF	EF	AU	Mint State	Total	High Grade
1841-O	34-37	9-10	2-3	0	45-50	2-3
1842-O	73-78	22-24	8-11	2-4	105-115	10-15
1843-O	65-67	30-34	11-13	4-5	110-120	15-18
1844-O	76-80	32-35	11-13	1-2	120-130	12-15
1845-O	63-68	27-29	8-10	2-3	100-110	10-13
1846-O	44-45	17-19	6-7	3-4	70-75	9-11
1847-O	122-172	95-100	21-23	12-15	250-300	33-38
1848-O	54-61	22-23	7-8	2-3	85-95	9-11
1849-O	37-38	13-14	4-6	1-2	55-60	5-8
1850-O	50-51	20-22	9-11	1	80-85	10-12
1851-O	159-191	120-135	18-20	3-4	300-350	21-24
1852-O	45-47	13-15	7-8	0	65-70	7-8
1853-O	79-84	41-44	17-18	3-4	140-150	20-22
1854-O*	80-85	32-35	12-13	1-2	125-135	13-15
1855-O	39-41	22-24	9-10	0	70-75	9-10
1856-O	40-41	18-21	7-8	0	65-70	7-8
1857-O	46-48	24-26	5-6	0	75-80	5-6
1858-O	49-53	33-35	26-28	7-9	115-125	33-37
1859-O	17-19	12-14	1-2	0	30-35	1-2
1860-O	37-38	22-23	12-13	4-6	75-80	16-19

\* Both varieties

NOTE: "High Grade" refers to coins grading About Uncirculated and higher.

### Overall Rarity

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| 1. 1859-O     | 11. 1848-O |
| 2. 1841-O     | 12. 1845-O |
| 3. 1849-O     | 13. 1842-O |
| 4. 1852-O     | 14. 1843-O |
| 4(tie) 1856-O | 15. 1858-O |
| 6. 1846-O     | 16. 1844-O |
| 6(tie) 1855-O | 17. 1854-O |
| 8. 1857-O     | 18. 1853-O |
| 8(tie) 1860-O | 19. 1847-O |
| 10. 1850-O    | 20. 1851-O |

### High Grade Rarity

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| 1. 1859-O     | 11. 1845-O |
| 2. 1841-O     | 12. 1842-O |
| 3. 1857-O     | 13. 1844-O |
| 4. 1849-O     | 14. 1854-O |
| 5. 1852-O     | 15. 1843-O |
| 5(tie) 1856-O | 16. 1860-O |
| 7. 1855-O     | 17. 1853-O |
| 8. 1846-O     | 18. 1851-O |
| 8(tie) 1848-O | 19. 1858-O |
| 10. 1850-O    | 20. 1847-O |

# 1879-O



Mintage: 1,500

## General Information:

The 1879-O eagle has the second lowest mintage figure of any New Orleans eagle. Its mintage is also the second lowest for any gold coin struck at this mint, regardless of denomination.

Most examples show a decent overall strike. The stars tend to come boldly impressed although a few pieces are a bit weak at the centers of a few of the final stars. The curls around the face are typically weak but the rest of the detail in the centers is sharp. All known 1879-O eagles are prooflike to some degree. The coloration is often a medium yellow gold. Most pieces are severely abraded and a number of examples show mint-made coppery toning spots.

No significant die varieties are known. All genuine 1879-O eagles show die polishing on the ribbon below IN which makes the base of the ribbon appear to "float" in the field.

As its tiny mintage suggests, this is a very rare coin in all grades. Most grade Very Fine or so and many of the examples sold at auction as "Extremely Fine" are overgraded. This issue is extremely rare in About Uncirculated and it may not exist in full Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 35-40

Overall Rarity: High R-5/Low R-6

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
18-19	12-13	5-7	0-1
(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(Mid R-7/High R-7)	(R-8/Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Delp (Stack's 11/72):812, ex Miles (Stack's 10/68):710. AU-55 to MS-60. Graded "Mint State" in these two sales but probably not Mint State by today's standards. I have not seen the coin and can not say for sure what the grade actually is.
2. Private collector, ex New York dealer (1992). PCGS graded AU-55; I grade the coin AU-55+ to AU-58. This is easily the finest 1879-O eagle I've seen.
3. Texas collection, ex Rarcoa via private treaty. AU-55.
4. Mid American Rare Coin Auction 5/92:408. AU-50+. Purchased by a New York dealer for \$14,850. Later graded AU-53 by PCGS.
5. (tie). Norweb II:2219, ex New Netherlands 6/57:270; Bowers and Merena 9/89:546, ex Kramer (Stack's 12/88):615, Stack's 1/86:282 (and) an example graded AU-50 by PCGS and owned by an Indiana collector.

# 1880-O



Mintage: 9,200

## General Information:

Due to the rarity of the 1879-O and the 1883-O eagles, the 1880 to 1882 New Orleans eagles are quite underrated. However, each of these issues is quite scarce in its own right.

Most 1880-O eagles are well struck. The hair and feather detail are bold and the only areas which tend to show weakness are a few of the stars and the top of both of the 8s in the date. The luster on this issue is excellent with very frosty surfaces intermixed with some slight areas of semi-prooflike reflectiveness. The coloration most often seen is medium yellow gold. High-grade, uncleaned examples often show rich orange-gold or deep coppery overtones. The surfaces are always heavily bagmarked.

No significant die varieties are known. All genuine examples show some degree of doubling on the stars and the base of the ribbon below the N in the motto is detached.

Most 1880-O eagles grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine. In About Uncirculated grades, this issue becomes very rare. In Mint State, the 1880-O eagle is extremely rare although a few very choice pieces are known.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 100-110

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
43-47	40-43	14-16	3-4
(Mid R-5/High R-5)	(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(High R-7/Low R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 10/88:128, Les Fox/Amazing Gold Rarities. MS-64. Identifiable by a tiny spot at star two and toning over the AT in STATES. The coin sold for \$10,450 and was later sold by Dick Appel to a client.
2. The Akers plate coin. MS-63 or so. Identifiable by a small toning spot near the first star.
3. Stack's 2/83:946. MS-60+. Lightly hairlined but with the appearance of a virtual gem. Identifiable by toning at the date.
4. McIntire 11/85:1280, ex McIntire 1/82:834. AU-58. Lightly hairlined. Identifiable by a mark under the fifth star and toning at the sixth star.
5. North Carolina collection, probably ex Stack's 9/81:110. AU-55+.



# 1881-O



Mintage: 8,350

## General Information:

The 1881-O is easily the single rarest individual date in the 1880 to 1882 New Orleans eagle date run.

This issue is not as well struck as the 1880-O eagle. Most of the stars are not full at the centers and the curls around the face and the ear of Liberty are nearly always flat. The luster is also not as good as that found on the 1880-O. It is often satiny and frequently dull; a few pieces are semi-prooflike. The coloration is often a light yellow-gold with rose or green-gold overtones. Many pieces have been cleaned and nearly all known examples are heavily abraded.

No significant die varieties are known. All 1881-O eagles have a low date which slants up to the right.

This is a rare and undervalued coin. It is most often found in Very Fine. Choice, problem-free Extremely Fine specimens are very hard to locate. In About Uncirculated, the 1881-O eagle is very rare and most of the specimens in this grade range are no better than AU-50 coins. Mint State 1881-O eagles are exceedingly rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
37-38	22-23	9-11	2-3
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6)	(Low-Mid R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. The example graded MS-63 by NGC. I have never seen this coin and would very much like the chance to examine it!
2. Chicago collector, ex the author via private treaty in 1986. MS-60. Identifiable by rich coppery toning at the borders and two small marks near the fifth star.
3. Stack's 9/81:114. AU-55.
4. Coin Galleries 2/85:2470. AU-50+
5. (tie). A group of a half dozen or so AU-50 examples, including two pieces graded AU-50 by PCGS.

# 1882-O



Mintage: 10,820

## General Information:

The 1882-O eagle is nearly identical to the 1880-O in terms of its overall rarity. These issues and the 1881-O are, in my opinion, very underrated in comparison to many No Motto eagles from this mint.

While sometimes found with a very sharp strike, many examples show scattered areas of weakness. The stars on the right side and the upper part of the eagle's right wing are often weak, as are the curls around the face of Liberty. More examples are found with prooflike fields than the 1880 and 1881 New Orleans issues, but some frosty 1882-O eagles do exist. The coloration ranges from a bright yellow gold hue to deep medium rose and green-gold.

No significant die varieties exist.

The 1882-O eagle is most often seen in Very Fine grades. Nice Extremely Fine examples are scarce and full About Uncirculated examples are very rare. This date is extremely rare in Mint State.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 100-110

Overall Rarity: High R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
39-43	42-45	16-18	3-4
(High R-5)	(High R-5)	(High R-6)	(High R-7/R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '84 (Stack's):1457, ex Auction '82 (Stack's):397. MS-60+. Identifiable by a mark near star 11 and another below the E in UNITED.
2. Stack's 9/81:118. MS-60 or slightly better. Lightly hairlined but a very attractive coin.
3. The example illustrated in the Akers book on eagles and in the "Redbook." MS-60 or possibly better. From the plates, this coin appears to be prooflike and very clean.
4. The example graded AU-58 by PCGS. This coin was later removed by its owner (a Massachusetts dealer) and offered for sale as an uncertified "MS-61" coin.
5. (tie). A handful of AU-50 or slightly better coins. This includes Heritage 3/91:5478 (graded AU-50 by PCGS); Stack's 1/86:295 and the example sold by the author to a Louisiana collector in 1992 (PCGS AU-50).

# 1883-O



Mintage: 800

## General Information:

The 1883-O has the lowest mintage figure of any gold coin ever struck at the New Orleans Mint. It has the lowest mintage figure of any branch mint eagle. And, it trails only the 1873 and the 1875 for the honor of having the lowest mintage figure for any Liberty Head eagle.

Most 1883-O eagles are poorly struck. The stars are usually extremely flat and the date is very flatly impressed. The curls around the face of Liberty are weak as is the hair near her ear. The reverse is often sharper than the obverse and, as a result, this is a very hard coin to accurately grade. As an example, the "typical" Extremely Fine 1883-O eagle may only have the detail of a VF-30 on its obverse. All known examples are prooflike and show coloration which ranges from orange-gold to a deep medium green-gold hue. The surfaces are almost always heavily bagmarked and some pieces show detracting rim marks as well.

No significant die varieties are known to exist. Late die states show a network of fine cracks on the reverse through the tops of UNIT in UNITED and off to the top of the left wingtip. I have never seen an 1883-O eagle with an added mintmark but would be surprised if one did not exist. While the overall appearance of the 1883-O eagle is much different than the 1883 eagles struck at the Philadelphia, Carson City or San Francisco mints, this is an issue which should be authenticated by an expert.

The 1883-O is the second rarest New Orleans eagle, trailing only the 1859-O. It is most often found in Very Fine and Extremely Fine grades. About Uncirculated pieces are truly rare but a bit less so than one might expect from a coin with a total mintage of only 800 business strikes. I doubt if a piece which would qualify as Mint State by today's standards exists.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 30-35

Overall Rarity: Low R-6

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
14-16	12-13	4-6	0
(High R-6)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(High R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. The example graded AU-58 by PCGS. This piece was evidently found in a Savannah, Georgia collection and was later sold by a New York dealer to another collector. It may possibly be the Golden I:2738 coin.
2. Texas Collection, ex Bell II (Rarcoa 4/63):419. AU-55+.
3. Amon Carter (Stack's 1/84):779. AU-55. Identifiable by a spot to the right of the date and another spot above the second 8 in the date.
4. Stack's 1/86:299, ex Stack's 4/75:631, Miles (Stack's 10/68):726. AU-50, prooflike and struck in deep yellow gold. Identifiable by a scratch opposite the second star, a mark above the final star and a small mark behind the right tip of the truncation.
5. Superior 2/92:2841, ex New York dealer; Stack's 10/16/91:993. Earlier sold as lot 416 in Mehl's Roach Sale (1945). About Uncirculated; also graded AU-50 by PCGS. Lustrous and clean with attractive rich coppery orange coloration.

# 1888-O



Mintage: 21,335

## General Information:

Beginning with this issue, the rarity levels of New Orleans eagles take on an entirely different complexion than those seen on earlier issues. While the 1888-O—and subsequent issues—have relatively low mintage figures, these dates are all far more common in high grades than one might expect.

The 1888-O eagle is often found very well struck. The stars and the date are sometimes a bit weak but the centers are mostly very well detailed. The luster is typically very good and is mostly frosty or slightly prooflike. The coloration can range from orange-gold to pale green-gold. Original, uncleaned pieces may have light rose toning, especially around the borders.

No significant die varieties exist.

This is one of the more common New Orleans eagles. Specimens are plentiful in all circulated grades and the 1888-O is more likely to be found in About Uncirculated than it is in Very Fine. Mint State coins are fairly common due to the existence of a number of small hoards which have been uncovered since the mid-1970's. However, nearly all of these pieces grade MS-60 or so. This date is still extremely rare in MS-63 and I have never seen or heard of an 1888-O eagle which was a gem by today's grading standards.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 275-325

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
35-55	80-90	110-120	50-60*
(Mid-High R-5)	(High R-4)	(R-4)	(Mid R-5)

\*NOTE: All Mint State rarity figures for New Orleans eagles struck in 1888 and in subsequent years are speculative. Uncirculated coins continue to be found in Europe (and other places) and it is very difficult to accurately estimate the actual number of pieces which may still exist.

## Condition Census:

There is so little difference in quality between all of the Mint State 1888-O eagles which I have seen that it is essentially impossible to make an accurate Condition Census for the date. Every Uncirculated piece I have seen has graded MS-60 to MS-61; all have been very heavily abraded.



# 1892-O



Mintage: 28,688

## General Information:

The 1892-O eagle is less rare, overall, than the 1888-O. In high grades, it is one of the most common eagles from the New Orleans Mint.

The quality of strike for this issue varies greatly. While some very sharply struck pieces exist, most are very flat on the first six stars and on the lettering in UNITED. Such coins also tend to show weakness on the curls near the face and the ear. The luster on most 1892-O eagles is frosty. The coloration is often a rich green-gold with orange overtones. Many high-grade pieces show a ring of deeper coloration at the border which contrasts the fields and the centers. As on most New Orleans eagles struck from 1888 onward, "sliders" are plentiful. Therefore, it is recommended that new collectors purchase pieces which have been graded by third party services.

No significant die varieties are known. Late die states show moderate to heavy cracks through the reverse legend and the denomination.

The 1892-O eagle is easily obtainable in any grade up to and including MS-60. Choice Uncirculated examples are extremely rare and I have never seen or heard of a gem.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 350-400

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
20-30	55-65	175-185	100-120
(Low R-6/Mid R-6)	(Mid R-5)	(Low R-4)	(R-4)

## Condition Census:

1. Eliasberg:799. MS-63.
2. (tie). A number of coins which grade MS-60+. This includes a small group of coins graded MS-61 by PCGS.
3. (tie). A substantial number of coins which grade MS-60. This includes numerous coins graded MS-60 by PCGS.

# 1893-O



Mintage: 17,000

## General Information:

The 1893-O eagle is scarcer in all grades than the 1888-O and the 1892-O. However, it is still not as rare a coin as its low mintage would suggest.

The quality of strike for this issue is sharper than on many of the New Orleans eagles produced during the 1890s. The stars are usually bold with full radial lines while the curls around the face and the ear of Liberty typically show near complete detail. The luster is excellent with most examples having a frosty texture; others are slightly reflective. The coloration is most often a rich orange-gold hue. Many high-grade, uncleaned pieces show pleasing visual contrast with rings of deep green-gold color at the edges and lighter orange-gold color in the fields. As with the 1892-O, many 1893-O eagles are very heavily bagmarked.

No significant die varieties are known to exist, but certain 1893-O eagles do show an area of die polish in the recess below the ear of Liberty and the nearby curl.

This is a common date in all grades up to and including About Uncirculated. MS-60 coins, while not really rare, are much harder to locate than similarly graded examples of the 1888-O and the 1892-O. Examples grading MS-63 are extremely rare and gems appear to be unknown.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 175-200

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
25-35	35-40	70-75	45-50
(High R-5/Low R-6)	(High R-5)	(Low R-5)	(Mid R-5/High R-5)

## Condition Census:

Virtually all of the Uncirculated 1893-O eagles which are currently known to exist grade MS-60. It is impossible to distinguish between these coins and, therefore, it is fruitless to establish a Condition Census for this issue.

# 1894-O



Mintage: 107,500

## General Information:

Despite having a much higher mintage than the 1888-O, 1892-O and the 1893-O, the 1894-O eagle is actually a scarcer coin than these other three issues.

The typical 1894-O eagle is well struck and has sharp stars with full radial lines. The curls around the face and the ear are generally well detailed while the feathers are sharp as well. The luster is of average quality and is typically satiny and slightly reflective. The coloration is often a pale green-gold or orange-gold. As on the previous two eagles from this mint, the 1894-O is often seen with bands of deeper toning at the peripheries.

No significant die varieties are known to exist, although some pieces do show the curls on the neck of Liberty detached as a result of die polishing.

While easily located in lower grades and even in the higher ranges of About Uncirculated, this issue is surprisingly scarce in Mint State. Unlike the other late-date New Orleans eagles, hoards of the 1894-O have not yet been found—and they may not exist. The few Uncirculated pieces which are available to collectors average MS-60. Choice pieces are extremely rare and no gems are currently known.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 140-160

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
30-35	50-55	50-55	10-15
(High R-5/Low R-6)	(Mid-High R-5)	(Mid-High R-5)	(High R-6/Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 12/78:221, ex Hollinbeck 5/52:1486. MS-63.
2. The example graded MS-62 by PCGS.
3. (tie). A small number of MS-60 or slightly better coins. This includes five pieces graded MS-60 by PCGS as of June, 1992.

# 1895-O



Mintage: 98,000

## General Information:

The 1895-O eagle has a mintage which is similar to the 1894-O. It is fairly comparable in terms of its overall rarity, although it is easier to locate in Mint State.

The quality of strike for this date is good. Some examples do show weakness on the stars and the curls which surround the face and the ear of Liberty. The luster is typically semi-prooflike but pieces with more than average quality reflectiveness are sometimes met with. The coloration ranges from bright yellow gold to a deeper orange-gold and rose. Original, uncleaned pieces sometimes show a ring of color at the peripheries. The surfaces are nearly always heavily abraded.

No significant die varieties are known. Some 1895-O eagles do show minor doubling on the reverse lettering.

This issue is common in lower grades and is easy to locate in About Uncirculated grades. It is somewhat scarce in Mint State and most examples which qualify as such are no better than MS-60 coins. Choice pieces are very rare while gems appear to be non-existent.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 175-200

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
25-30	50-55	65-70	35-45
(Low R-6)	(Mid R-5)	(Low R-5)	(High R-5)

## Condition Census:

1. The coin graded MS-63 by PCGS.
2. The coin graded MS-62 by PCGS.
3. (tie). A number of coins which grade MS-60 or slightly better. This includes a number of coins graded MS-60 and MS-61 by PCGS.



# 1897-O



Mintage: 42,500

## General Information:

The 1897-O eagle is another issue which was once regarded as very rare in higher grades but which has, in the past 10 to 15 years, become more readily available.

Many examples of this date show weakness of strike on the stars and on the date. The curls near the ear and the face of Liberty are sometimes weak as well. Two types of luster are seen on 1897-O eagles. Some pieces have rich, frosty luster while others are semi-prooflike and reflective. The coloration is often a rich orange-gold and uncleaned pieces often have nice green-gold and rose overtones. As on the other issues of this mint and era, "inner rings" of color are often seen at the borders. Heavily abraded examples are typical and locating a clean, problem-free 1897-O is difficult, regardless of its grade.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

The 1897-O eagle is common in all circulated grades including About Uncirculated. Mint State pieces are harder to locate than any other New Orleans eagle from the 1890s with the exception of the 1894-O. Most Uncirculated 1897-O eagles grade MS-60 and choice pieces are quite rare. A few gems do exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 150-175

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
25-30	50-55	45-50	30-40
(Low R-6)	(Mid R-5)	(Mid R-5)	(High R-5/Low R-6)

## Condition Census:

1. Eliasberg:814, ex Clapp, U.S.Mint (11/1897) at face value. MS-65+. Later graded MS-66 by PCGS.
2. Stack's 10/88:135. MS-64. Later graded MS-64 by NGC.
3. Auction '85 (Paramount):1456. MS-63 or slightly better.
4. Stack's 4/78:897. MS-63 or slightly better.
5. (tie). A pair of coins graded MS-63 by PCGS.

# 1899-O



Mintage: 37,047

## General Information:

The 1899-O has the lowest mintage figure of any eagle struck at this mint during the 1890s. Until ten or so years ago, this issue was considered to be quite rare in higher grades. Today, it is still scarce but a number of high-grade pieces have been found in Europe.

The 1899-O eagle is often very sharply struck with full stars and just a bit of weakness on the curls near the ear and the face of Liberty. The luster on this issue is excellent. Pieces can be found with reflective, semi-prooflike surfaces or with very frosty surfaces. The most typical coloration is orange-gold and green. Once again, pieces with "inner rings" of color and often seen.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

The 1899-O eagle is more difficult to locate in circulated grades than are most of the other New Orleans eagles of this era. However, the collector should be able to locate a nice About Uncirculated coin with little effort. Mint State pieces are slightly scarce and most grade MS-60 or so. Choice pieces are very rare while gems are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 150-175

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
20-25	40-50	55-60	35-40
(Low-Mid R-6)	(Mid R-5/High R-5)	(Mid R-5)	(High R-5)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 10/88:139, ex Les Fox/Amazing Gold Rarities, Eliasberg:819, Clapp, obtained from the U.S. Mint in November, 1899 at face value. MS-67 or better. Graded MS-68 by PCGS. The single finest New Orleans gold coin I have ever seen or heard of.
2. (tie). The examples graded MS-63 by PCGS and by NGC. Possibly, though not likely, the same coin.
4. Kagin 8/87:3142. MS-63 or so.
5. (tie). A group of coins grading MS-60+ or better. This includes three examples graded MS-62 by PCGS as of May, 1992.

# 1901-O



Mintage: 72,041

## General Information:

As recently as a few years ago, the 1901-O was regarded as a "sleeper" among late-date Liberty Head eagles. But enough pieces have turned up in recent years to make this one of the more common New Orleans eagles.

Most examples of this date are well struck. It is not uncommon, though, to find pieces which do show weakness on the stars and on the curls near Liberty's face. The luster is most often frosty but some semi-prooflike pieces exist. The coloration is often a medium orange-gold or green-gold. Peripheral "inner rings" of coloration are frequently seen on uncleaned, high-grade specimens. Heavily bagmarked specimens are frequently seen.

Two die varieties are known to exist. The more common of the two has a normal mintmark. The rarer variety has a sharply double punched mintmark.

The 1901-O eagle is common in all circulated grades. Mint State examples are rather easy to locate although most seen do not grade better than MS-60. Choice and gem examples of this date, while rare, are more plentiful than any other New Orleans eagle with the exception of the 1904-O.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 200-225

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
20-25	50-55	75-80	55-65
(Low/Mid R-6)	(Mid R-5)	(High R-4/Low R-5)	(Low R-5/Mid R-5)

## Condition Census:

1. Superior 1/89:3965, ex Stack's 10/88:141, Les Fox/Amazing Gold Rarities, Eliasberg:824, Clapp, obtained from the U.S. Mint in November, 1901 at face value. MS-66. Graded MS-66 by both PCGS and NGC.
2. 1982 ANA (Steve Ivy Numismatic Auctions):1103. MS-64.
3. The example graded MS-64 by PCGS. Possibly the same as coin #2.
4. Auction '79 (Paramount):343. MS-63.
5. (tie). A small group of MS-63's including four graded MS-63 by PCGS as of May, 1992.

# 1903-O



Mintage: 112,771

## General Information:

The 1903-O is the most common With Motto New Orleans eagle. This makes it a popular issue with type collectors.

The 1903-O is generally one of the best struck New Orleans eagles. Some pieces have a bit of weakness on the stars and on the curls but most are boldly impressed. The luster on the typical example is also far above average. Pieces are seen with semi-prooflike and with frosty surfaces. The coloration can range from bright orange-gold to a deeper green-gold hue. Most pieces are bagmarked; these are more often heavier on the obverse than on the reverse.

No significant die varieties are known although a few pieces do show light repunching on the mintmark.

The 1903-O eagle is common in all circulated grades. Heavily bagmarked "sliders" are common as well. Uncirculated pieces are easy to locate but only in the MS-60 range. This date is still quite scarce in MS-63 and gems are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 400-500

Overall Rarity: High R-2/Low R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
30-40	90-130	160-190	120-140
(High R-5/Low R-6)	( R-4)	(Low R-4)	(R-4)

## Condition Census:

1. Eliasberg:829, ex Clapp, obtained from the U.S. Mint in November, 1903 at face value. MS-65+. Graded MS-66 by PCGS.
2. Auction '85 (Rarcoa):460. MS-63.
3. Auction '88 (Superior):432, ex Auction '83 (Rarcoa):452. MS-63. Identifiable by a thin scratch from the final star to the lowest curl.
4. Heritage 12/85:2249. MS-63 or so.
5. (tie). A number of MS-60+ examples including ten pieces graded MS-62 by PCGS as of June, 1992.



# 1904-O



Mintage: 108,950

## General Information:

The 1904-O is another reasonably common late-date New Orleans eagle. I have seen more really nice examples of this date than any other gold coin struck at this mint.

1904-O eagles are generally well struck although not as much so as 1903-O eagles. Many pieces are slightly weak on the stars and the curls around the face. The quality of the luster found on this issue varies but it is almost always above average. Pieces exist which are frosty and there are also many semi-prooflike coins. The coloration varies greatly with green-gold, light orange-gold and blazing yellow gold specimens seen in equal amounts. Most higher grade pieces shows numerous abrasions, particularly on the obverse.

One 1904-O eagle exists which offers a very convincing argument for being called a Branch Mint Proof or a presentation striking. This coin is incredibly well struck and has a satiny finish which is actually somewhat similar in appearance and texture to that found on 1909 to 1910 Satin Finish Proof gold coins. Interestingly, this piece is accompanied by an envelope which reads as follows:

"First Gold Coined 1904, W.J. Brophy, Coiner, U.S. Mint, \$10.00 and \$5.00 (*sic*?! No 1904-O half eagles were coined.)

A complete pedigree for this coin can be found in the Condition Census listing below.

The 1904-O eagle is very common in circulated grades and heavily abraded "sliders" are common as well. MS-60 and marginally nicer coins are also not hard to locate, but this issue is definitely scarce in MS-63 and quite rare in gem condition.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 275-325

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
15-25	50-70	120-130	90-100
(Mid-High R-6)	(Low-Mid R-5)	(R-4)	(R-4)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '89 (Akers):1422, ex Auction '88 (Akers), Marty Haber, purchased at the 1979 ANA convention. MS-67; possible presentation piece or Proof. Graded MS-68 by NGC and MS-67 by PCGS. Later certified as a "Proof" by ANACS in 1990 and sold by Heritage to a client for a figure in excess of \$200,000.
2. Mid American 5/85:1596. MS-65+. Identifiable by a few light toning spots in the left obverse field.
3. Eliasberg:832, ex Clapp, obtained from the U.S. Mint in November 1904 at face value. MS-64. Identifiable by a light toning spot over the D. in the denomination.
4. Auction '89 (Akers):1423, ex Stack's 12/79:913. MS-64. This coin sold for a staggering \$12,500 in 1979; it brought \$7,150 in 1989.
5. (tie). A small number of lesser MS-64 examples including Heritage 2/86:1671, Stack's 3/90:1314, and Auction '90 (Akers):1928 as well as five pieces graded MS-64 by PCGS as of May, 1992.

# 1906-O



Mintage: 86,895

## General Information:

This is the final eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint. At one time, the 1906-O eagle was considered to be a rare and very underrated coin. But a number of high-grade examples have been discovered in the past decade or so.

This issue is typically found with a sharp strike. On some pieces, the first two and the final two or three stars may show some weakness at the centers. The curls are usually sharp, even around the face and the ear of Liberty. The luster is above average and most specimens have frosty surfaces. The coloration can range from light green-gold to a deeper orange-gold. Many uncleaned, higher grade 1906-O eagles have superb natural toning. The surfaces on the typical piece is, however, heavily bagmarked.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This is a common coin in all circulated grades. Many high-end About Uncirculated examples exist but these are often unattractive due to heavy abrasions. Uncirculated examples are not scarce and can be rather easily located in grades up to and including MS-62. Choice pieces are rare and gems are very rare. A few extremely nice 1906-O eagles do exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 250-275

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
15-20	60-65	100-110	75-80
(Mid-high R-6)	(Low R-5/Mid R-5)	(R-4)	(High R-4/Low R-5)

## Condition Census:

1. (tie). A pair of coins graded MS-65 by PCGS as of May, 1992. This includes the example sold as Lot 1944 in Rarcoa's session of Auction '88.
4. Superior 1/86:3260, ex Eliasberg:837, Clapp, obtained from the U.S. Mint in November 1907 at face value. MS-64. Identifiable by a prominent bagmark at the 11th star.
5. (tie). The pair of coins graded MS-64 by PCGS.



Section  
**SIX**

## Double Eagles

I. Type I. Liberty Head, No Motto (1849-1866)

1850-O, 141,000

1851-O, 315,000

1852-O, 190,000

1853-O, 71,000

1854-O, 3,250

1855-O, 8,000

1856-O, 2,250

1857-O, 30,000

1858-O, 35,250

1859-O, 9,100

1860-O, 6,600

1861-O, 17,741

Total Mintage: 829,191

II. Type III: Liberty Head, With Motto, Value Spelled TWENTY  
DOLLARS (1877-1907)

1879-O, 2,250

Total Mintage: 2,250

Combined Total Both Types: 831,441



# 1850-O



Mintage: 141,000

## General Information:

The 1850-O has long been a popular issue with collectors due to its status as the first double eagle to be struck at the New Orleans Mint.

The overall quality of strike for this issue is reasonably good. The centers are usually well defined, although a few examples may show some weakness on the curls. The borders are always less sharp than the centers. Some examples show weakness on the date and nearly all show some degree of weakness on the stars. The luster on this issue is below average and it is usually matte-like or semi-prooflike. The coloration most often seen is a deep green-gold. As on most Type I double eagles from this mint, the surfaces on the 1850-O tend to be very heavily abraded.

Two varieties are known. The first has a closed 5 with the knob of the five touching the cusp. The second has an open 5 with this digit away from the cusp. The latter appears to be slightly scarcer, although it carries no premium.

This is a common issue in Very Fine and low-grade pieces are still being found in Europe. In Extremely Fine, the 1850-O double eagle becomes moderately scarce. It is quite rare in About Uncirculated; far more so than the 1851-O and the 1852-O. In Mint State, this issue is extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 150-175

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
110-127	30-35	9-11	1-2
(R-4)	(High R-5/Low R-6)	(Low-mid R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

(Note: According to Walter Breen, five Uncirculated examples were part of the Baltimore Hoard. It is doubtful if any of these pieces would qualify as Mint State by today's standards.)

1. 1976 ANA Sale (Stack's):3158. AU-58+. Just a bit shy of the Mint State level. Identifiable by a mark below the chin.
2. The example graded AU-58 by PCGS. Unseen by me but possibly the same as #3.
3. Kramer:721, ex Stack's 5/89:265. AU-55 or slightly better. Struck on a striated planchet but still very choice for the issue.
4. Wisconsin collector, ex midwestern dealer via private treaty in 1986. AU-55. Fully prooflike; the obverse is lightly worn while the reverse is extremely choice.
5. (tie) A small group of AU-50 to 55 pieces including 1974 ANA:958 and Stack's 6/83:702.



# 1851-O



Mintage: 315,000

## General Information:

The 1851-O double eagle is the most common New Orleans double eagle.

Examples of this date are not as well struck as the 1850-O. Many pieces are softly struck on the lower portion of the curls and on the date. Areas which are also prone to show weakness include the stars and the denticles on the obverse. The luster is most often semi-prooflike or fully prooflike. Some satiny examples are known and these exist in greater number than on the other early-date New Orleans double eagles. The coloration on the typical 1851-O double eagle is a rich green-gold; some uncleaned, high-grade pieces have superb orange overtones. Locating specimens which are not heavily abraded is very difficult.

Varieties exist with a light date and with a heavier date. The former appears to be scarcer than the latter.

At least two hoards of high-grade 1851-O double eagles are known. It is said that "10 satiny Uncirculated" pieces were included in the Baltimore Hoard which was discovered in 1934 and dispersed in 1935. It is probable that the few choice Mint State examples of this date which exist today are from this source. A hoard of 23 or so pieces was discovered off the coast of Santa Barbara in the mid 1980s; the finest of these was sold as Lot 4035 in Superior's 9/87 sale. All had Mint State sharpness but are mattelike from exposure to seawater.

This issue is common in Very Fine and Extremely Fine. Nice About Uncirculated pieces can be located without a great amount of difficulty. Mint State coins are rare and probably do not exist above the MS-64 level.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 350-400

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
172-190	130-150	40-50	8-10*
(Low R-4)	(R-4)	(Mid R-5/High R-5)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)

\* The "saltwater Uncirculated" pieces mentioned above are not included in the Mint State figures for this date.

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 9/85:1850, ex Stack's 1/84:835; probably earlier from B. Max Mehl and almost certainly obtained directly from the Baltimore Hoard. MS-63+. Identifiable by a small mark to the right of the date.
2. Dallas Bank Collection. MS-63. Identifiable by a mark near the final star on the obverse and toning spots on the lower part of the reverse rim. The Akers plate coin.
3. Auction '81 (Stack's):1908, ex 1976 ANA (Stack's):3163. MS-63 or so. Prooflike; identifiable by a small spot to the left of the eighth star.
4. Washington, D.C. collection. MS-60+. Purchased from a non-collector whose father had picked it out from the pieces in the Baltimore Hoard. Identifiable by a number of toning spots on the obverse.
5. (tie). A small number of MS-60 pieces. These do not include any of the saltwater Uncirculated coins.

# 1852-O



Mintage: 190,000

## General Information:

This third and final member of the popular common-date New Orleans double eagle trio of 1850 to 1852 is the most available of these issues in high grades.

The quality of strike for the 1852-O double eagle varies. While some very sharply struck pieces are known, most show slight weakness on the lower curls (and the corresponding area on the reverse) as well as on the stars and on the reverse lettering. In addition, a number of pieces show bevelling on the rims as is often seen on Dahlonega half eagles struck during this era. Most 1852-O double eagles are semi-prooflike or prooflike but a few frosty pieces are known. The typical example has deep green-gold color; the frosty pieces tend to show a lighter yellow gold hue. As with all New Orleans double eagles, the 1852-O is nearly always found with heavily bagmarked surfaces.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This date is common in circulated grades and its population is increasing, even today, by the addition of low-end coins which are being located in Europe. AU-55 and borderline Uncirculated coins are scarce. More Mint State 1852-O double eagles exist than any other date from this mint. While most aren't that choice, a few spectacular pieces exist including at least one full-blown gem.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 325-375

Overall Rarity: R-3

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
205-228	80-100	30-35	10-12
(High R-3)	(High R-4)	(High R-5/Low R-6)	(Low R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Dallas Bank Collection. MS-65. The Akers plate coin. The finest known New Orleans double eagle of any date.
2. A coin owned by a Heritage client. MS-64. It was sent to NGC (and graded MS-63) and PCGS (where it was graded MS-64) but it was cracked out of both holders as the client requested an MS-65 grade. Jim Halperin called it "the finest I've ever seen."
3. Auction '90 (Akers):1946, ex Bowers and Merena 11/88:6537 and Auction '86 (Rarcoa):989. MS-63. Later graded MS-63 by NGC. Identifiable by a tiny mark near star three and a tiny mark on Liberty's chin.
4. (tie). Auction '84 (Rarcoa):1957, ex Beck I (1/75):567. Identifiable by a coppery spot over the date ; Auction '80 (Superior):462. Identifiable by a cut near star 12. Both grade MS-60+.
5. (tie). Stack's 9/81:222, ex Holmes (Stack's 10/60):3909, Dunham (Mehl, 6/41); Stack's 11/74:583, ex Merkin 10/73:492. Both grade MS-60.

# 1853-O



Mintage: 71,000

## General Information:

In terms of total numbers known, the 1853-O double eagle is considerably scarcer than the three issues which precede it.

The 1853-O is often found softly struck on the lower back curls and the corresponding area on the reverse. The stars often show flatness and the tops of the letters on the reverse are weak at their tops. Nearly all known examples are semi-prooflike or fully prooflike. The luster tends to be more subdued than on the earlier New Orleans double eagles. The coloration, as on the earlier issues, is invariably a rich green-gold. Heavily bagmarked specimens are the rule and the typical 1853-O double eagle will show numerous deep, detracting marks in the fields.

All pieces have a heavy date. Early strikings sometimes show noticeable doubling on the stars on the left obverse.

This date is readily available in Very Fine and Extremely Fine. Specimens are still being located in Europe, but most of these are worn and heavily marked. In About Uncirculated grades the 1853-O double eagle is a very scarce coin. Uncirculated pieces are much rarer than the 1851-O and the 1852-O issues and no choice pieces are currently known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 125-150

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	<u>Mint State</u>
70-80	38-50	13-15	4-5
(High R-4/Low R-5)	(Mid-High R-5)	(High R-6)	(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Mid-western private collection, ex Stack's 5/91:1674. MS-60+ or better. The surfaces were exceptionally clean for the issue. This coin sold for \$28,600.
2. Auction '81 (Stack's):1911, ex 1976 ANA (Stack's):3171. MS-60. prooflike; toned over ES in STATES.
3. Stack's 1/86:406. Virtually MS-60 but cleaned at one time. An outstanding strike for the issue.
4. Stack's 3/90:1360, ex Stack's 2/57:1064. AU-55 to 58. Frosty; identifiable by a mark between stars 11 and 12.
5. (tie). A small group of AU-55 pieces including Heritage 12/87:1466 (now in a Utah collection); Auction '79 (Rarcoa):771 and the piece graded AU-55 by PCGS.

# 1854-O



Mintage: 3,250

## General Information:

Beginning with this issue, the mintage figures for New Orleans double eagles shrank dramatically from their 1850 through 1853 levels. The 1854-O has long been regarded as a great rarity within the Liberty Head double eagle type. It trails only the 1856-O double eagle as the rarest gold coin ever struck at this mint.

All known examples show a reasonably sharp strike overall. The borders tend to be more bold than on earlier issues from this mint and the lower curls are usually sharp. As one might expect on a coin with such a small mintage, the surfaces on all known examples are prooflike. Most show green-gold color although a few have been so harshly cleaned that they now have an unnatural, light yellow gold hue. This date is well known for its heavily abraded surfaces and a few of the survivors show noticeable mint-made defects.

The 1854-O double eagle has a small date which slants up towards the right. Genuine pieces show raised die file lines on the TY in LIBERTY; these do not appear on the Philadelphia or San Francisco double eagles dated 1854 and can be used as hallmarks of authenticity on any piece offered for sale.

The 1854-O is just the slightest bit less rare than the 1856-O double eagle, but it is actually somewhat rarer in high grades. When offered for sale, the typical specimen will grade Very Fine and show heavy bagmarks and/or evidence of having been cleaned. Extremely Fine pieces are very rare and About Uncirculated examples are exceedingly rare. No fully Mint State 1854-O double eagle exists.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 20-25

Overall Rarity: Low R-6/Mid R-6

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
12-14	6-8	2-3	0
(High R-6/Low R-7)	(Mid-High R-7)	(R-8)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Dallas Bank Collection. AU-55. The Akers plate coin. Identifiable by a reverse planchet flaw from the T in UNITED to the right wing.
2. Eliasberg:883, ex Bell I (Stack's 12/44) AU-50. Identifiable by a small scratch below the E in UNITED.
3. Stack's 1/86:408. AU-50 or so. Not as choice as #2; identifiable by a stain below the O in OF.
4. Ivy 12/81:1560, ex Auction '79 (Stack's):934. EF-45. Exceptionally clean surfaces for the issue.
5. (tie). 1974 ANA:967 and the example sold in the 11/72 ANA Sale. Both grade EF-40+. At least one, if not both, were later graded EF-40 by PCCS.



# 1855-O



Mintage: 8,000

## General Information:

When David Akers stated that the 1855-O "...is one of my favorite double eagles" in his 1982 reference on this denomination, this issue immediately went from being a "sleeper" to a well-recognized rarity. In the intervening decade, this date has remained quite rare, although a small number of relatively high-grade pieces have come onto the market.

The 1855-O is usually well struck. The hair detail on Liberty tends to be sharp with the exception of the curls below the ear. While the first star on the obverse is sometimes fuzzy, most of the other stars show full radial lines; particularly on high-grade examples. Some 1855-O double eagles have a faint mintmark and even those coins which do have a sharp mintmark will show some weakness on the left side of the "O." The luster on this issue is above average and is almost always semi-prooflike or fully prooflike. The coloration on original, uncleaned coins is a rich green-gold. While the surfaces on the typical 1855-O may be a bit less abraded than on previous New Orleans double eagles, many pieces show unusual mint-made planchet chips, especially on the obverse.

All 1855-O double eagles have slanting 5's in the date. No significant die varieties are known to exist.

Nearly all known examples grade Very Fine. Nice Extremely Fines are rare and most offered for sale as such (whether they are graded by a third party service or are "raw") are overgraded. Strictly graded About Uncirculated 1855-O double eagles are extremely rare and no fully Mint State examples are known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
37-38	18-20	10-12	0
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Low R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. Auction '86 (Paramount):1962. AU-55+. Identifiable by a large flake left of the bust point. It realized \$14,300 when it last sold.
2. Stack's 4/88:1838, ex Stack's 2/83:1081. AU-55. Virtually identical in quality to #1. It last sold for \$13,750.
3. The example which traded hands at the October 1991 Long Beach convention. It was sold by a New York dealer to a collector in excess of \$15,000. AU-55; graded AU-53 by PCGS. This is probably the cleanest example known to exist.
4. Heritage 1988 ANA:2394. AU-55. Identifiable by a small spot near the third star.
5. (tie). Auction '89 (Rarcoa), Stack's 1/84:844, the example owned by NY Gold Mart in 1991-92 and Bowers and Merena 3/91:4, ex Kramer:733. All grade AU-50; the last piece was graded AU-55 by NGC and is now owned by Dick Appel.

# 1856-O



Mintage: 2,250

## General Information:

The 1856-O double eagle is the rarest gold coin struck at the New Orleans Mint. It is, as well, the rarest regular issue non-Proof-only Liberty Head double eagle.

The quality of strike for this issue is fairly similar to that found on the 1854-O. Liberty's hair often shows weakness, especially behind the coronet and below the ear. Every known example is prooflike to some degree, although on lower grade pieces there may be so many abrasions that most of the original surface is not intact. The coloration is a medium greenish yellow gold. With the exception of one or two pieces, the "typical" 1856-O double eagle is very unattractive from an aesthetic point of view.

All 1856-O double eagles have an upright 5 in the date. There are no die varieties known, although a few pieces show sharper mintmarks than others.

As a rule, 1856-O double eagles are only offered for sale at important auctions. This is a "classic rarity" in the truest sense and it is an issue which appears on more want lists than nearly any other gold coin struck at a branch mint. Most survivors grade Very Fine or Extremely Fine. Some of the EFs which I have seen (and which are listed below in the "by grade" chart) are more realistically VFs by today's standards. The rarity of this coin leads it to be habitually overgraded. Only one Mint State piece is known and this is one of the most important and desirable United States gold coins.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 15-20

Overall Rarity: Mid R-6/High R-6

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
6-8	5-6	3-5	1
(Mid R-7/High R-7)	(High R-7)	(High R-7/R-8)	(Unique)

## Condition Census:

1. Private collector, ex Superior via private treaty sale for a reported \$312,500 in late 1980/early 1981. MS-60+. The coin was earlier owned by Amon Carter and it was sold to Larry Demerer (with possible dealer intermediaries) in 1979. The coin is fully prooflike and has, in the past, been called a "Proof."
2. Eliasberg:889, ex Bell I (Stack's 12/44) or Atwater. AU-55. Identifiable by a cut near Liberty's ear. Purchased by MTB at the sale and then sold to a collector.
3. Stack's 11/89:1500, ex Stack's 1/84:847. AU-50. Bagmarked in the left obverse field. This is the Amon Carter specimen.
4. Sotheby's 5/87:352, ex 1975 ANA (Superior):1601. EF-45. Identifiable by a planchet flaw to the right of the date.
5. Stack's 1/86:414, ex Stack's 11/72:816, Stack's 3/69:856. EF-40 or better. Either this coin or #4 was later graded EF-40 by PCGS and is now owned by a Kansas City dealer.

# 1857-O



Mintage: 30,000

## General Information:

Production of double eagles at the New Orleans Mint increased significantly in 1857, but was still considerably lower than the high of 1851.

Most 1857-O double eagles are rather poorly struck. Areas of weakness include the lower curls, the hair near the ear and the stars to the left of the portrait. The reverse is frequently weak at the lettering and on the denticles. This issue generally shows good luster and nearly all pieces seen to date are semi-prooflike or fully prooflike. The coloration is most often a medium green-gold hue. Two characteristics of this date are small patches of die rust near the ear of Liberty and a thin, lightly impressed mintmark. I have seen a few low-grade pieces on which the mintmark was so faint that it was hard to notice.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

In my opinion, this is the most underrated New Orleans double eagle. In lower grades, it carries a small premium over the 1850 through 1852 New Orleans double eagles yet it is much rarer. Most known examples grade Very Fine and are heavily bagmarked. Nice Extremely Fine pieces are quite scarce and full About Uncirculated examples are rare. Mint State 1857-O double eagles are extremely rare and only one choice piece is known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

<b>VF</b>	<b>EF</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>Mint State</b>
33-37	27-29	14-17	1-2
(High R-5)	(Low R-6)	(High R-6)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Bass Collection, ex Kaufman (Rarcoa, 4/78):914. MS-63+. Identifiable by streaks of toning through OF AMERI, the tail of the eagle and the Y in TWENTY.
2. Auction '83 (Superior):1938. AU-55. Identifiable by splashes of toning on many of the obverse denticles.
3. Norweb III (Bowers and Merena 11/88):3974, ex Kreisberg/Schulman 2/61:1353. AU-55. Fully prooflike; obverse reeding mark near the fifth star.
4. The example sold to a collector by Delaware Valley Rare Coins in January 1992 for 5,750. PCGS AU-53.
5. (tie). A small number of AU-50 coins. This includes the five different examples graded as such by PCGS as of June, 1992.

# 1858-O



Mintage: 35,250

## General Information:

The 1858-O double eagle is similar in mintage and overall rarity to the 1857-O double eagle.

This issue is generally found with a poor quality of strike. Most pieces are weak on the hair near the ear of Liberty and, less often, on the lower curls. The date and the stars on the left obverse (especially the first through the fourth) are often weak as well. This issue is mainly found with semi-prooflike or prooflike fields. Its coloration is often a medium green-gold and, less often, a distinct rich yellowish gold. The surfaces are usually heavily abraded. As on the 1857-O, the mintmark is sometimes weakly impressed and the "O" may not be easy to see on low-grade pieces.

In his *Complete Encyclopedia of United States Coins*, Walter Breen lists an 1858-O with a spectacular blundered die. This variety is said to have part of a third 8 protruding from the lower curl into the field. I have never personally seen or heard of such a piece and if this variety does exist it is extremely rare.

This issue compares favorably to the 1857-O in lower grades, but it is a bit more available in Extremely Fine. In About Uncirculated, the 1858-O double eagle is very rare. Mint State pieces are extremely rare and the only piece I have personally seen which graded as such was lightly cleaned.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 80-85

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
34-36	33-34	12-13	1-2
(High R-5)	(High R-5)	(High R-6/Low R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Stack's 6/77:1236. MS-60. Prooflike; bagmarked obverse. Identifiable by a spot at star six on the obverse. I have not seen this coin but two reliable sources have confirmed that it would probably still grade MS-60 by today's standards.
2. Stack's 1/86:420. MS-60. Lightly cleaned; fully prooflike. Identifiable by marks to the right of the date. This coin sold for \$8800.
3. New York Gold Mart inventory, ex Superior 2/92:2954. AU-55; graded AU-58 by PCGS. Prooflike; liberally abraded on the surfaces.
4. Norweb III (Bowers and Merena 11/88):3977. AU-55. Prooflike. Identifiable by marks near the 13th star on the obverse.
5. S.L. Contoursi inventory (early 1992). PCGS AU-53 semi-prooflike with nice surfaces for the issue.



# 1859-O



Mintage: 9,100

## General Information:

The 1859-O is one of the rarest of all the New Orleans double eagles. In my opinion, it is rarer than the 1855-O and it trails only the extremely rare 1856-O and the 1854-O.

Most 1859-O double eagles are poorly struck. Many are flat on Liberty's hair and also on the obverse stars. The borders are also typically weak and may show pronounced bevelling. The luster tends to be below average. All known examples are prooflike to some degree but the amount of reflectiveness present may be obscured by the heavy bagmarks which are present on nearly all 1859-O double eagles. The coloration is most often a pleasing medium green-gold shade.

Two varieties are known. The first shows a heavy date with a firmly impressed mintmark. The second has a lighter date with a thinner mintmark. The two varieties appear to be similar in terms of rarity.

All 1859-O double eagles have light die clashing above and below the ear of Liberty and at the nape of her neck within the recesses of the two lowest curls. These clashmarks can be seen even on low-grade pieces.

This is a rare issue in all grades and most survivors are heavily bagmarked Very Fine pieces. Extremely Fine coins are quite rare while full About Uncirculated examples are very rare. Mint State 1859-O double eagles are extremely rare.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
28-29	17-18	8-10	2-3
(Low R-6)	(High R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(R-8)

## Condition Census:

1. Fairfield (Bowers and Ruddy, 10/77):2752, ex AAA 2/74:869. MS-60+ or better. The Akers plate coin. Possibly now in the Bass Collection.
2. Superior 9/88:5691, ex Jesse Lipka. Virtually MS-60. Graded AU-55 by PCGS. The coin sold for \$11,000.
3. A second coin graded AU-55 by PCGS. Its pedigree is not known to me.
4. Bowers and Merena 3/91:11, ex Superior 5/90:5736, Sotheby's 5/87:362. AU-50. Also graded AU-50 by PCGS. Identifiable by a spot near the first star and two spots near the fifth star.
5. Heritage 11/89:1519. AU-50.

# 1860-O



Mintage: 6,600

## General Information:

The 1860-O is the fourth rarest New Orleans double eagle. It is a rarer issue than the 1859-O, however, in high grades.

Most examples of this date are weakly struck on Liberty's hair. The first four stars on the obverse are nearly always very soft, but the stars on the right are much sharper. The luster is above average and most examples are either semi-prooflike or nearly fully prooflike. The coloration tends to be a bit lighter than on previous double eagles from this mint and is sometimes a warm, glowing yellow-gold shade. The surfaces are nearly always heavily abraded. This, coupled with the fact that most examples are not well struck, makes the 1860-O a very hard coin to accurately grade. In my experience, most pieces are overgraded by a full grade level.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

This is a rare coin in any grade. Most examples grade Very Fine. Properly graded Extremely Fine pieces are very rare and About Uncirculated 1860-O double eagles are extremely rare. Only one Mint State coin is known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	Mint State
34-36	18-20	7-8	1
(High R-5)	(Mid R-6/High R-6)	(Mid R-7)	(Unique)

## Condition Census:

1. Superior 2/92:2965, ex NY collector, MTB, Eliasberg:901, Atwater (Mehl, 1946). MS-60 or so. Identifiable a small streak from the sixth star to the hair and by a small flake over TW in TWENTY.
2. 1974 ANA (Paramount):985. AU-55. Identifiable by a tiny defect on the neck of Liberty and another above the 6 in the date. The coin sold for \$5,750.
3. Sotheby's 5/87:428. AU-50+. Identifiable by a small mark near star eight and toning at MERI in AMERICA.
4. Stack's 1/86:428 ex Miles (Stack's, 10/68):851. AU-50. Prooflike; abraded in the left obverse field.
5. Stack's 6/79:609. AU-50. Identifiable by a planchet flaw at the point of the truncation.

# 1861-O



Mintage: 17,741

## General Information:

This is the final double eagle struck at the New Orleans Mint until this facility was reopened in 1879.

The 1861-O is probably the most poorly struck of all the double eagles which were struck at this mint. Liberty's hair is always very soft and many of the stars on the obverse are very weakly detailed. Most pieces are prooflike but they tend to have soft, less reflective luster than on other issues from this mint and era. The typical coloration is a medium greenish-gold hue. Nearly every example I have ever seen has been very heavily bagmarked. Thus, the collector who wishes to obtain an 1861-O double eagle with real "eye appeal" will either have to wait a long time or lessen his demands.

Of the 17,741 pieces struck, 5,000 were produced by the Union while the rest were minted by the Confederacy. It has long been believed that those coins with significant weakness at the base of the date are those struck by the Confederacy. I feel that this is a "numismatic wife's tale" since all examples of this issue show some degree of weakness on the date. It is impossible to state with certainty who struck which coins.

The mystique of this date has made it somewhat overvalued in comparison to the New Orleans double eagles struck in the late 1850s. But, the 1861-O is still a very tough coin to obtain in any grade and it is a rarity in About Uncirculated. Nearly every piece I have seen has been significantly overgraded and EF-40 coins are about as nice as one is likely to find.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 90-95

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

<u>VF</u>	<u>EF</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>Mint State</u>
54-55	28-30	8-10	0
(Mid R-5)	(Low R-6)	(Low R-7/Mid R-7)	(Unknown)

## Condition Census:

1. The example graded AU-58 by PCGS. Unseen by the author; possibly the same as #2.
2. Stack's 6/89:835. AU-55. Prooflike with deep green-gold toning at the edges.
3. Miles (Stack's 10/68):854. AU-55 or so. Sharpness of Mint State but lightly cleaned.
4. 1974 ANA:990 AU-50. Prooflike. Identifiable by a small planchet flake at the top of the bust and another at star eight.
5. Eliasberg:904. AU-50. Identifiable by scuffmarks in the left obverse field and on Liberty's chin.

# 1879-O



Mintage: 2,325

## General Information:

Its tiny mintage and status as the only Type III double eagle to be struck at the New Orleans Mint make the 1879-O an extremely popular and desirable issue.

Generally, this is one of the best struck of all New Orleans double eagles. Most high grade examples show very sharp detail on Liberty's hair and on the obverse stars. The only areas of weakness seen on this issue are at the borders; particularly on the lower reverse. Most 1879-O double eagles are prooflike although a few frosty, non-reflective pieces are known to exist. The coloration ranges from a light yellow gold to a deeper medium green-gold. Interestingly, many high-grade examples of this date show noticeable alloying spots on the surfaces. These are Mint-made and do not affect the value of the coin.

No significant die varieties are known to exist.

While scarce in all grades, this issue is actually somewhat overrated in terms of its overall rarity. Most known 1879-O double eagles grade Very Fine. Extremely Fine coins are rare and accurately graded About Uncirculated's are very rare. Fully Mint State coins are extremely rare although at least three very nice Uncirculated examples are currently known to exist.

## Rarity:

Total Known: 70-80

Overall Rarity: High R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF  
38-42  
(High R-5)

EF  
21-24  
(Mid R-6)

AU  
7-9  
(Mid R-7)

Mint State  
4-5  
(High R-7)

## Condition Census:

1. Dallas Bank Collection. MS-63 or better. The Akers plate coin.
2. 1979 ANA (New England Rare Coin Auctions):465. MS-60+. Identifiable by a reverse lamination. The coin sold for \$23,000.
3. Texas collection. MS-60. Light copper spots on the reverse.
4. (tie). Stack's 1/86:481. AU-55. Identifiable by a copper spot near the L in LIBERTY (and) Numismatic Emporium, earlier from an unnamed European source. AU-55; graded AU-58 by NGC. This coin surfaced at the fall 1991 Long Beach coin show.
5. (tie). Auction '88 (Akers):978 and Ullmer (Stack's 5/74):526, ex Miles (Stack's 10/68):900, Wolfson (Stack's 10/62):924. Both coins grade AU-50+. The first has toning near the denomination while the second is deeply toned and shows marks on the reverse.

## Rarity Summary: New Orleans Double Eagles

Date	VF	EF	AU	Mint State	Total	High Grade
1850-O	110-127	30-35	9-11	1-2	150-175	10-13
1851-O	172-190	130-150	40-50	8-10	350-400	48-60
1852-O	205-228	80-100	30-35	10-12	325-375	40-46
1853-O	70-80	38-50	13-15	4-5	125-150	17-20
1854-O	12-14	6-8	2-3	0	20-25	2-3
1855-O	37-38	18-20	10-12	0	65-70	10-12
1856-O	6-8	5-6	3-5	1	15-20	4-6
1857-O	33-37	27-29	14-17	1-2	75-80	15-19
1858-O	34-36	33-34	12-13	102	80-85	13-15
1859-O	28-29	17-18	8-10	2-3	55-60	10-13
1860-O	34-36	18-20	7-8	1	60-65	8-9
1861-O	54-55	28-30	8-10	0	90-95	8-10
1879-O	44-46	25-26	9-10	3-4	80-85	12-16

### Overall Rarity

1. 1856-O
2. 1854-O
3. 1859-O
4. 1860-O
5. 1855-O
6. 1857-O
7. 1858-O
- 7(tie) 1879-O
9. 1861-O
10. 1853-O
11. 1850-O
12. 1852-O
13. 1851-O

### High Grade Rarity

1. 1854-O
2. 1856-O
3. 1860-O
4. 1861-O
5. 1855-O
6. 1850-O
- 6(tie) 1859-O
8. 1879-O
9. 1858-O
10. 1857-O
11. 1853-O
12. 1852-O
13. 1851-O







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